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Why college—to expand your thinking or get a job? **PAGE 22**

Social media—can it be a force for good? **PAGE 30**

Brown Alumni Magazine
April-May 2025

Brown

A BAM SPECIAL ISSUE
EDITED BY CURRENT STUDENTS

Meet Gen Z

At a time of unprecedented turmoil, a generation comes of age.

Social media influencer Lauren Eusebio '25 has more than one million followers.

Discovery Through Dialogue

Dialogue is the lifeblood of Brown University. Through open dialogue and the rigorous shaping and reshaping of ideas, we advance the knowledge and understanding that is critical to academic excellence.

In furtherance of these values, this spring we launched a new community-wide project, Discovery Through Dialogue, to highlight and expand the University's long-standing ethos of open inquiry through dialogue. Advancing dialogue is also essential to Brown remaining an open, inclusive, and respectful community where students, faculty, and staff feel safe and supported to share their views on challenging topics and complex issues.

Discovery Through Dialogue was born in direct response to the calls of faculty, staff, and students across every facet of our community who asked for more opportunities to practice and observe open dialogue across diverse viewpoints and to cultivate important related skills, such as listening and conflict resolution.

Ensuring that Brown continues to unlock knowledge and understanding through productive and respectful dialogue is a shared project of our campus community. The project features three

pathways for engagement: knowledge-building, skill-building, and community-building.

Brown students, faculty, and staff now have increased opportunities to participate in conversations that strengthen productive dialogue on campus; to access resources that aid in developing the skills needed for productive exchanges; and to build the trust and understanding that unlocks learning, creativity, and intellectual inspiration. For example, the Community Dialogue Project—which helps students build skills, confidence, and strategies to engage productively in open inquiry and respectful dialogue—has been expanded and scaled to allow for greater participation and engagement.

In recent years, we have seen a marked shift across our nation, including on our campus, in the way individuals engage around contentious and polarizing issues, especially with those whose views differ from their own. It has become increasingly commonplace to isolate ourselves in online echo chambers rather than listen to and learn from each other. The Discovery Through Dialogue project encourages an alternative by amplifying and fostering new opportunities for meaningful conversations across a wide range of perspectives.

While Discovery Through Dialogue presents new opportunities for our community, it is grounded in the University's long-standing commitments to academic freedom and intellectual curiosity, and it supports the academic exploration that has taken place across our campus for decades. Since the University's founding more than 250 years ago, open inquiry and respectful discourse have been hallmark elements of Brown's commitment to unlocking knowledge and understanding.

While some of the work that takes



place at a university is solitary, many of our greatest advancements are realized through collaboration with others whose knowledge, skills, and life experiences are different from our own. Society's greatest challenges—climate change, inequality, cybersecurity, and so many more—demand the concerted efforts of people from a wide range of areas of inquiry who bring unique perspectives and areas of expertise to bear on these complex challenges.

Through cultivating meaningful conversations among and between students, faculty, and staff across a variety of viewpoints, we will continue to advance Brown's mission to discover and preserve knowledge and understanding.

I encourage you to visit the new Discovery Through Dialogue website at discovery-dialogue.brown.edu to learn more and view the recordings of some of our signature events. I look forward to advancing Brown's commitment to open inquiry together through this community project.

Christina H. Paxson
President

Open inquiry and respectful discourse have been hallmark elements of Brown's commitment to unlocking knowledge.

Inside



22 Are liberal

As Gen Z navigates rising tuition and a competitive job market, the pressure to prioritize pre-professional internships and classes may be limiting the true value of a college education. BY WILL BUNCH '81

30 Why the attention-

Social media isn't just for the vain. Meet six Brown students and alums using their platforms to share stories, inspire others, and create connections beyond the screen. BY ETHAN PAN '22

"There's strong research to suggest that racism is a product of empathy."

—Myles Ringel '25

16 Can you have

Gen Z is redefining gender, challenging the binary, and forcing a public reckoning. Brown alums and researchers weigh in on the evolution—and politicization—of identity.

40 The gender binary

"While the legal system may have an interest in maintaining only two sexes, our collective biologies do not."

—Anne Fausto-Sterling '70 PhD, professor emerita of biology

14 Is horse-hair



arts over?

"They had been at Brown for five minutes and they were already thinking about internships."

—Jocelyn Frelier, associate director,
Brown in Washington



seeking?

"Suddenly I was gaining thousands of subscribers a day."

—Jae Ahn '24

too much empathy?

Pre-med student Myles Ringel '25 explores the complexities of empathy through his independent concentration, examining its role in racism, incarceration, and medicine. BY HALEY SANDLOW '25



—lowkey sus?

For \$250 a semester, students at Brown can ride horses, learn polo, and clash mallets on the field. With a focus on accessibility, the Polo Club's revival is transforming the sport into a unique campus experience. BY MEGAN TALIKOFF '25

braiding a sport?

"I wouldn't go to a 9 a.m. lecture but I will totally come to 9 a.m. polo."

—Alexa Vasquez '27

In Our Own Words

Six in 10 U.S. companies have fired a recent college graduate they hired this year. We're not surprised. We're aware of the narrative about Gen Z. Entitled and coddled. Addicted to our phones. Obsessed with ourselves and our identities. Unwilling to read. Bad workers (for anti-capitalist reasons, of course).

Much of what has been written about us comes from those who stand outside of our experiences. But, like any generation, we cannot—and should not—be confined to an archetype. While we are the first true digital natives, we're not all illiterate or lazy or radical. However, we do find ourselves coming of age in a rapidly changing and fractured world that we struggle to make sense of.

That's why we bring you this issue.

For the first time, BAM was conceptualized, planned, and delivered by four graduating seniors. We're behind the ideas, the stories, and the questions this issue asks. By providing a window into our world—the problems we care about, the uncertainty that grips us, and the entertaining ways we find joy—we hope to introduce you to Gen Z, on our terms.

While our concerns differ from those of generations before us, our stories are your stories, too. We are your children, your students, your colleagues. And our priorities—stay safe, promote justice—are age old.

Some topics we tackle in this issue may feel foreign. In one feature, we report on how Gen Z grapples with gender and gender fluidity—concepts

that have been politicized in recent years and weaponized under the current presidential administration. By speaking to researchers and students in the Brown community and beyond, we show that new terms like *nonbinary* and *gender fluid* are not radically new ideas as much as new vocabulary to express old feelings.

Additionally, we profile a number of social media “influencers”—people who share curated versions of their lives online. While public opinion often lingers on the (very real) dangers of social media and chronic digital engagement, the students we call “influencers” more often identify as “content creators,” public citizens who leverage their platforms to inform and build connections.

At the same time, our generation experiences familiar anxieties about life after Brown—recently dialed up to an extreme. As the cost of college and living rises, students stress about securing high-power internships earlier and earlier. Even high schoolers are flooding professors' inboxes, scrambling for research opportunities. Is this race to the top destroying the liberal arts philosophy that Brown claims to stand for? We explore this in our feature on pre-professionalism.

Soon, the four of us will be abruptly thrust out of Brown's storied gates. What comes next, as our generation grabs the reins? Our country is nose-diving into chaos at alarming speed. Will human rights still exist? Will we be employed? Will home ownership be possible? What will Brown's campus look like when we visit? Will Providence be underwater? Is my resume any good? Do you happen to have any connections in the dying journalism industry?

Keep scrolling!

Yukti Agarwal '24.5
Rachel Kamphaus '25
Dana Richie '25
Megan Talikoff '25

We find ourselves coming of age in a rapidly changing and fractured world.

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For the first time in 125 years, the BAM invited guest editors to shape an issue—four of our senior student interns. And when they titled this special issue “Meet Gen Z,” they weren’t kidding. Every alum profiled is Gen Z. The features represent questions the editorial team felt were particularly relevant to or defining of their generation. And many of the contributors are also Gen Z. Meet the current and former BAM editorial, writing, and social media interns who made this special issue come to life!

EDITORS



Yukti V. Agarwal '24.5 graduated from the BrownIRSD Dual Degree Program with degrees in psychology, contemplative studies, textiles, and art history. She is a multidisciplinary creator. These days, she works/freelances as an editor, curator, researcher, designer, and fine artist.



Rachel Kamphaus '25 is an English and classics concentrator who loves writing and editorial work. In her time at Brown, she has served as the editor-in-chief for the *Brown Classical Journal* and the *Rib at Brown* and plans to spend some time in publishing before going to graduate school.



Dana Richie '25 concentrates in history and loves multimedia storytelling. Whether writing for campus publications or freelancing in the greater Providence area, she often wanders around with a camera in tow, which she affectionately calls the “big iron on my hip.”



Meg Talikoff '25 is a psych concentrator heading toward a career in couple and family therapy. She’s enjoyed reporting and editing for radio and print and plans to stay involved with local journalism. Her favorite things include community-building, the color green, and hot chocolate.

CONTRIBUTORS



Jack Brook '19 is a reporter with the Associated Press based in New Orleans via the Report for America Corps. He was previously a freelance journalist based in Cambodia.



Daphne Dluzniewski '26, writing intern, is an international & public affairs (IAPA) concentrator. She loves soccer, music, new cuisines, and learning foreign languages.



Victoria Liu '28, writing and editorial intern, is a behavioral decision sciences concentrator. She’s always junk journaling, making pottery, or on the green when it’s sunny.



Maja Mishevaska '27, social media intern, is a CS & gender studies concentrator from Macedonia. She loves listening to metal, thrifting, and practicing her Italian.



Grace Mugo '25 is a social media intern and an MCM & CS-econ concentrator. She loves fashion, poetry, and film and can usually be found in her favorite library (the Hay)!



Ethan Pan '22, NYC-based food writer and digital marketing coordinator at the James Beard Foundation, has been published in *Outside*, *Philadelphia*, and *5280*.



Bianca Rosen '25, writing intern, is a Middle East studies & international and public affairs concentrator. She speaks fluent Arabic and Italian and enjoys the Go-Gos.



Haley Sandlow '25, writing intern, concentrates in English & French lit. She is an aspiring organic farmer, a part-time sex ed teacher, and an amateur aerial gymnast.



Eiffel Sunga '27, social media intern, is an anthropology & IAPA concentrator. Raised in SoCal, she often misses the sunny weather, warm beaches, and ripe avocados.

What Do You Think?

REACHING THE TOP

Thank you for your article about Nalini Nadkarni '76 ("Tree-Top Trail-Blazer," Jan.-Mar. '25). What amazing strength and courage to survive a 50-foot fall and to continue her work! As a college friend and fellow bio/ecology major, I recall her passion for exploration, adventure, and the natural world. The piece brought me back to one of my best childhood memories, regularly climbing a giant weeping willow and pretending I was a pilot or astronaut, sitting in its cockpit-like top, 70 feet above ground with a view of the entire neighborhood. How many kids get a chance to do this anymore? And I, like Nalini, have noted that climate change has stressed the forest in Western Massachusetts, where I walk daily. We need more innovative, collaborative, and fearless people like her to explore the rooftops of the forests and all the astonishing treasures of the natural world, before it is too late.

David Gottsegen '77
Belchertown, Mass.

I had the privilege of interviewing Nalini Nadkarni in the mid-'80s when I was the writer of a column in *Glamour* magazine called "Women Right Now," which highlighted the achievements of female firsts and women with unusual careers. She taught me the meaning of the word *epiphyte* and talked about her work in the forest canopy of Monteverde, Costa

Rica. That interview always stuck with me, especially when she spoke of once taking her young child up into the canopy with her, where he stuffed some epiphytes into his mouth before she could stop him. Thank you for this fascinating piece about the ups and downs of her now long and very accomplished career. I would also like to know, what became of her young epiphyte-eater?

Laura Mosedale '82
London, England

DIVERGING ON DIVESTMENT

The very first sentence was misleading: "whether...Brown should divest...from certain companies doing business in Israel...." ("An End to the Divestment Question?" Jan.-Mar. '25). The elephant in the room is the ongoing genocide in Gaza, not divestment. Except for one reference to a professor of Holocaust and genocide studies, the word *genocide* is not used in the article. Around 350 Israeli soldiers have been killed since Oct. 7, 2023, which means maybe 350 Hamas fighters have been killed in street fighting. The accepted death toll of 43,000 men, women, and children is "death from a distance." Around 70 percent are women and children. Israel has long since depleted its inventory of artillery shells and aircraft bombs. President Joe Biden, whose dementia was apparent to all who met him, kept the resupply going 24/7. BAM's response is the same old post World War II malarkey. We stopped Hitler from grabbing eastern Europe (yay) then gave it to an equally murderous Stalin (boo). To prevent the domino theory in Southeast Asia (yay), Vietnam's losses were necessary (boo). Taking out Saddam Hussein in Iraq (yay) destabilized the entire Middle East (boo). This was more of the same.

Bob Munson
Newbury Park, Calif.
Parent

"While other professors would be living in the ivory towers and not come down from Mount Olympus... Barrett was right there on ground zero."

—Michael Joukowsky '87

Brown has joined lawsuits to try to restore National Institutes of Health funding, saying cuts threaten active clinical trials in cancer, Alzheimer's, and more.



Brown University School of Public Health
@Brown_SPH

"Not seen anything like this."

After a funding freeze @ communications pause, the \$250M in federal grants RI received in 2024 from @NIH may be in jeopardy. #BrownSPH & @BrownMedicine faculty & researchers say they're looking for answers amidst the chaos.



From thepublicradio.org

While protests at Brown and elsewhere about divestment may have given students a sense of excitement, divestment is hardly going to end the horrors of the conflict in the Middle East ("Divestment: Students For & Against," Under the Elms, Sept.-Oct. '24). Brown is not the place to deal with it, nor should it be. If the goal is to change U.S. policy, protesters' energies would be better directed to the senators and representatives in their home state. Issues of harassment and prejudice on campus, which are crucial issues, are another matter and should not be conflated with divestment.

John Pooler '62
Atlanta

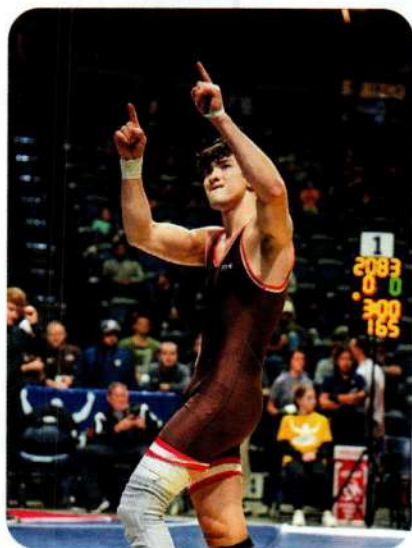
Perhaps the most unfounded suggestion is that what passes for a Brown education on Israel/Palestinians will somehow advance the quality of the discourse on campus. Nothing could be further from the truth. Two of the courses [cited] will be taught by profes-

sors Michael Steinberg and Adi Ophir, outspoken critics of Zionism and/or Israel. Moreover, that a course taught by Omer Bartov has “seen an uptick in enrollment” is troubling. Bartov wrote in the *New York Times*, 34 days after the Hamas atrocities in Israel, that Israel was engaged in “crimes against humanity” and warned that “genocide” was around the corner. Matti Friedman, writing in the *Free Press* last July, said Bartov “belongs to Israel’s most unfortunate export category—academics who find a home for themselves on an increasingly unhinged Western left.” Professor Katharina Galor of the Judaic studies department, long before October 7, signed open letters urging the German government to fund orga-

MEDITATING ON IT

Having gone through Professor Eric Loucks’s course on mindfulness meditation, I found “Omm, No” (Jan.-Mar. ’25) surprising and disturbing. Then, as I recalled my first experience with meditation, I found the description of “emotional blunting” was the primary reason I stopped meditating after a short while. Jump forward 50 years to Loucks’s course on mindfulness meditation, a vastly different, and more positive, experience. I have continued to meditate in a group setting since that

Blake Seito ’25 finished the regular wrestling season with an 11-3 overall record and is nationally ranked.



brownu_wrestle and 4 others ...

brownu_wrestle

Blake Seito becomes the first Brown University Wrestler in history to win the Southern Scuffle! Congrats on an outstanding performance!! #EverTrue #BuiltDifferent

@ivyleague @ncaawrestling
@brownu_bears #ivyleague

jhowland

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ceceunsweetened



nizations that “peacefully challenge the Israeli occupation” and accusing Israel of “systematic oppression of the Palestinian people.” To suggest that [these four] are representative of a “flourishing of scholarship on the Middle East” is naive and misleading. If and when there are courses taught by professors whose views are diametrically opposed to theirs, there might be the beginnings of Middle East scholarship at Brown. Until then, Brown will continue to foster pro-Palestinian indoctrination and propagandizing.

Willis Goldsmith ’69
Indian River Shores, Fla.

More letters at brownalumnimagazine.com under “An End to the Divestment Question”

course. What was the difference? Does aging affect reactions? Does meditating in a group setting with post-meditation discussion act as a “debriefing”? I would love to learn more from both Britton and Loucks—perhaps have a “point/counterpoint” interview?

Victoria Williams Ancona ’71
Cranston, R.I.

Dr. Willoughby Britton’s research into the side effects of meditation is a valuable contribution to our knowledge about the positive—and negative—outcomes of meditation. When entering long, intensive meditation courses, students need to be aware of the benefits and potential hazards of delving into the subconscious mind where demons they have

never faced lie dormant. I take exception to her characterization of Buddhism as a religion/practice that discourages critical thinking and recommends that students eschew their doubts. The opposite is the case. Buddhist practitioners are encouraged to discover the benefits—and limitations—of meditation through their own experiences rather than relying on the words of a teacher, even the Buddha. Doubt is one of the five hindrances but so are sloth and worry. There is no conspiracy to convince meditators to let go of their doubts about the practice any more than there is to get them to deny their languor when they are tired. You cannot fool meditators into ignoring their doubts because they are tuned in to the nuances of their thoughts and feelings. But you can help them find ways to investigate them. This is what Britton is doing with her research: bringing the light of science and knowledge to awareness practices. Buddhism and science both promote healthy skepticism, differing only in their methods and where they look to find answers.

Jim Pesout ’71
Murphys, Calif.

More letters at brownalumnimagazine.com under “Omm, No.”

EARNING THAT DEGREE

Affirmative action may have been a factor in my admittance into Brown in 1977 (“Affirmative Action for Rich Kids,” *The Big Issue*, Jun.-Aug. ’24). Nevertheless, it was not instrumental in me graduating with a bachelor of science with honors in applied mathematics and economics. The motivators and catalysts for this were my advisors, my mentors, and the exceptional Dean Hazeltine, as well as upper classmates such as Teri Williams ’79, John Paul Grandy ’78, classmates, and sorority sisters. The rigorous academic courses gave me a purpose and a beacon of light to finally walk through the Van Wickle Gates. Diversity and inclusion may have supported me to join the track team, but it was the discipline and passion of the coach and team members that motivated us to be All Ivy. This outstanding program gave me the inspiration to complete the Marine Corps marathon in 3.40 hours, at age 29. My classmate Jocelyn McClain ’81 and her family opened their home to me the night before with unforgettable homemade

How long can we keep telling the Brown truth?



States are banning books. Scientific research and freedom of the press are under fire. The federal government is even banning certain words. Yet this student-edited special issue addresses hot topics head-on. At the BAM, we can still do that, thanks to Brown's educational mission of open inquiry and its institutional value of free discourse. But for how much longer?

If you're attending Commencement and Reunion this year, please join

BAM Board Chair Eric Schurenberg '75 (founder, Alliance for Trust in Media; former editor-in-chief at *Time*, CBS, and *Fast Company*) in a conversation with BAM editors and our student editorial team:

Yukti Agarwal '24.5, Rachel Kamphaus '25, Dana Richie '25, and Meg Talikoff '25

New Voices, New Era, Old Platform

How *Brown Alumni Magazine's* Student Editors Cope in a Post-Truth Age

A Commencement forum exploring Gen Z's view of truth, trust, and journalism in today's disrupted information landscape.

85 WATERMAN | ROOM 130 | 9-10 A.M. | SATURDAY, MAY 24

pasta. It took a village to accomplish my achievements. Affirmative action programs create opportunities, not hand-outs or a false sense of entitlement. Every degree is earned, because the University empowers students to achieve their full-potential and further a lifelong love of learning.

*Jana D. Handwerk '81
South Orange, N.J.*

Harvard at 36 percent vis a vis Brown at 8 percent says it all ("Admissions Update," From the President, Jun.-Aug. '24). Legacy preferences are excellent and provide inclusion, loyalty, love of the institution, and willingness to contribute monies after graduation. I have seen this. What comes to mind is the rejection of those who would be third or fourth generation Brown admits. I can tell you story after story of the successes of these turn-downs who went to other elite schools and contributed greatly. What is the breakdown of legacy donations vis a vis the 92 percent who aren't legacies? Harvard leads the way; Brown should follow. At least move it to 20 percent.

*Michael Peters '59
Orleans, Mass.*

CELEBRATING BARRETT

Thank you for profiling and celebrating Barrett Hazeltime ("The Students Behind ENG9," Classes, Nov.-Dec. '24). His classes were incredibly interesting and inspiring for a budding entrepreneur like myself. He was one of the only professors who supported and celebrated all the hard-working student ath-

letes at Brown (I played on the women's lacrosse team). We put in long, grueling hours competing for our great school and were often looked down upon by all the professors. Professor Hazeltime was one of the great ones that cheered us on and I can't tell you how much we needed that. I graduated Brown and joined the investment banking and private equity world. I often reflected on ENG9 and eventually took the risk of starting my own company. I reviewed the old Harvard Business case studies I'd saved from that class which helped me build a successful business. I know I'm not the only one that has Professor Hazeltime to thank for his passion and quiet support of future entrepreneurs and student athletes. Thank you!

*Jocelyn Moore Gailliot '03
New York City*

Barrett Hazeltime is a kind and loving person. He always cared about you and listened to you. While other professors would be living in the ivory towers and not come down from Mount Olympus to talk with you about your future, ideas, who you are as a person, Barrett was right there on ground zero. "Are we still friends?" he would ask. And he would take the time to listen and help form a plan for your future. When I came to him in the early 1990s to formulate entrepreneurship-

Coorganized by Brown's Simmons Center, the exhibition is in D.C. until June 9, then traveling internationally.

specific classes for Brown students, he loved the idea. He and I set out a syllabus, readings, a list of guest speakers. He loved it because it was all about what the students wanted—they wanted to hear from our alumni and connect. Our alumni wanted to connect with students. This grew into the entrepreneurship program and then a formal degree from Brown. He trusted you to be the best person and encouraged you to one day be the person on the stage sharing your journey—because he wanted to hear it. He cared about you. Thank you, Barrett, for caring. Thank you for listening. Thank you for evolving with the times. Thank you for always being available. I cannot thank you enough.

*Michael Jukowsky '87
Providence, R.I.
michael.jukowsky@ganesa.net*

*Many, many more letters online under
"The Students Behind ENG9"*

WEARING YOUR COMPUTER

In reference to "Foresight," Beyond the Gates, Jan.-Mar. '25. As head of conservation at the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, we have been working with Lisa Krohn '85 on how to best mount and display our Cyberdesk [wearable computer, designed by Krohn]. It has been an amazing collaboration and has yielded fruitful insight into materials degradation and design philosophy.

*Sarah Barack '96
South Orange, N.J.*

HONORING DAVID EGILMAN

Thank you for featuring David Egilman '74, '78 MD ("Battling Big Pharma," Obituaries, Nov.-Dec. '24). The class I took with him in 1997 had the generic title of Occupational/Environmental Health. It was really about epistemology and the ways we should critically examine hypotheses and results from testing those hypotheses. Getting to discuss Karl Popper, Michel Foucault, and Thomas Kuhn for the class was a worthwhile and memorable challenge. I am equally grateful for his intellectual contributions to my Brown education and for the inspiration he gave by sharing with his students the whys and hows of his work to advance justice.

*Stephanie Kissam '00
Oak Park, Ill.*



nmaahc and 2 others ...

nmaahc @nmaahc's first international traveling exhibition, "In Slavery's Wake: Making Black Freedom in the World," is now open!

"In Slavery's Wake" reckons with the impact of slavery and colonialism on present-day societies around the world and explores the often-overlooked efforts of the enslaved to force the end of slavery with legal emancipation and abolition. It provides a wellspring for descendants to draw upon to help create a better world for themselves and their communities through art, storytelling, music, protest, and communal healing.

#InSlaverysWake

Mignonette Dooley Johnson/NMAAHC



"My hope is to contribute to fostering an understanding of immigration as the deeply human practice that it is. Remaining community-oriented—honoring my commitment to my community through this work—is critical to me."—Rhodes Scholar Ariana Palomo '25, who immigrated from Mexico as a child and will pursue two master's degrees at Oxford: refugee and forced migration studies, and global governance and diplomacy.



APRIL–MAY 2025

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Under the Elms

Redefining 'Retro'

'60s-era sunshine pop has returned to Brown and students are loving it

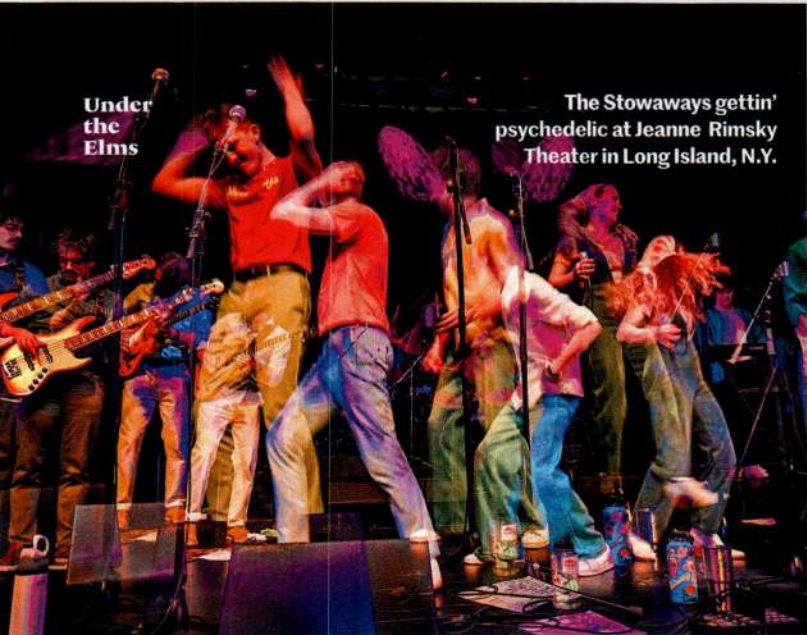
Many student musicians spend their free time writing original songs. Not Linus Lawrence '25. "The weird thing I do in my free time is that I just go into my room with a little notebook and I try and transcribe the Beach Boys' vocal parts as closely as I can," says Lawrence, the founder and lead creative of the Stowaways, a nine-person Beach Boys cover band formed in fall 2022.

The Stowaways is one of the many retro cover bands on campus that have gained popularity through live shows, Gigs on the Green, and A Night On College Hill performances, though it's probably the most popular. Lawrence attributes this to their energetic show and "tight sound," one achieved through structured rehearsals

Founder and lead creative Linus Lawrence '25 mid-"Sloop John B"

Under
the
Elms

The Stowaways gettin'
psychedelic at Jeanne Rimsky
Theater in Long Island, N.Y.



and careful vocal arrangements of six- to seven-part harmonies.

The Stowaways also remains fresh by modifying its set, keeping a few core Beach Boys titles while branching out into '60s and '70s classics—from the Beatles, Electric Light Orchestra, the Mamas & the Pappas, and Fleetwood Mac—and adapting them to the harmony-forward style of '60s music shaped by Brian Wilson.

The band's "faithful recreation" of a sound from a different era is striking a chord on campus. "There are a lot of '60s music fans that seem to have just kind of come out of the woodwork recently," says Lawrence.

Liam Rogers '25, bassist for the Stowaways and the Grateful Dead cover band Mud Room, agrees. "It's kind of a novelty thing," says Rogers. "A lot of people are like, 'Oh yeah. My parents would put this on when I was little, and it's so fun you're doing it.' And they know every word."

Nostalgia isn't the only reason why retro bands have succeeded on campus. According to JD Gorman '26, bassist for the "jazz-inspired soul-funk-pop cover band" MOODRING, they're also practical to get going—the songs are well-known, danceable, and sing-along-able, while still easy enough for students to learn.

"They're popular songs from a time when music was pretty much fully instrumental," Gorman says. "It wasn't sampled, it wasn't overly produced, so you can replicate it in a live setting. All the bands sort of have a similar instrumentation," he explains, "I mean, save for, like the Stowaways, but they're a 12-piece behemoth of a musical unit. Like that shit is crazy. Dude, who doesn't want to be part of the Stowaways?"

Yet Lawrence says that when he invited various musicians and vocalists from across campus to a Beach Boys listening party in his room in fall 2022, he never expected any of them would accept his proposal to help realize his vision for the cover band. (All eight of them did.)

"I felt like a very uncool Nick Fury," Lawrence says, referring to the fictional founder of the Avengers. "Then all of a sudden we cut to last spring," he says. "I think we've become one of the go-to bands on campus to give people a good time. Ultimately, we don't sound like any other band I've heard on campus. And I'm incredibly proud of that."

—HALEY SANDLOW '25

Strength in Numbers

Student workers are forming labor unions at an unprecedented pace.

"I'm fired up!" That was the signature phrase of Anna Ryu '25, president of the Labor Organization of Community Coordinators (LOCC), before the union's strike in August 2024.

The Community Coordinators (CCs) are Brown's resident advisors and the strike was their latest escalation in protest of six months of failed negotiations with the University over LOCC's first collective bargaining agreement. After three days, the strike ended with the University vowing to compromise. "It was one of the most empowering and exciting times of my life because I saw what was possible when all of us came together," adds Ryu.

Before 2022, there were only two undergraduate labor unions registered with the National Labor Relations Board. Today, there are three on College Hill alone. Brown's first undergraduate union, The Teaching Assistant Labor Organization (TALO), was established in March 2023 to secure better working conditions for computer science TAs.

TALO had a domino effect, spurring LOCC's unionization in October 2023 and the creation of the Third World Labor Organization (TWLO) by student workers at the Brown Center for Students of Color (BCSC) in spring 2024.

The catalyst for TWLO's founding

"Better than you could, like if you wanted to play Astroworld by Travis Scott," Gorman adds.

BITS



COMMON DIABETES DRUG
METFORMIN SIGNIFICANTLY
REDUCES SKIN CANCER RISK,
FOUND DERMATOLOGIST
TIFFANY LIBBY '25 MPH.



EVA ERICKSON '28 PHD,
ENGINEER AND HOCKEY
CAPTAIN, IS COMPETING ON
SEASON 48 OF SURVIVOR. SHE'S
GOT OUR VOTE.

pasta. It took a village to accomplish my achievements. Affirmative action programs create opportunities, not handouts or a false sense of entitlement. Every degree is earned, because the University empowers students to achieve their full potential and further a lifelong love of learning.

*Jana D. Handwerk '81
South Orange, N.J.*

Harvard at 36 percent vis a vis Brown at 8 percent says it all ("Admissions Update," From the President, Jun.-Aug. '24). Legacy preferences are excellent and provide inclusion, loyalty, love of the institution, and willingness to contribute monies after graduation. I have seen this. What comes to mind is the rejection of those who would be third or fourth generation Brown admits. I can tell you story after story of the successes of these turn-downs who went to other elite schools and contributed greatly. What is the breakdown of legacy donations vis a vis the 92 percent who aren't legacies? Harvard leads the way; Brown should follow. At least move it to 20 percent.

*Michael Peters '59
Orleans, Mass.*

CELEBRATING BARRETT

Thank you for profiling and celebrating Barrett Hazeltine ("The Students Behind ENG9," Classes, Nov.-Dec. '24). His classes were incredibly interesting and inspiring for a budding entrepreneur like myself. He was one of the only professors who supported and celebrated all the hard-working student ath-

letes at Brown (I played on the women's lacrosse team). We put in long, grueling hours competing for our great school and were often looked down upon by all the professors. Professor Hazeltine was one of the great ones that cheered us on and I can't tell you how much we needed that. I graduated Brown and joined the investment banking and private equity world. I often reflected on ENG9 and eventually took the risk of starting my own company. I reviewed the old Harvard Business case studies I'd saved from that class which helped me build a successful business. I know I'm not the only one that has Professor Hazeltine to thank for his passion and quiet support of future entrepreneurs and student athletes. Thank you!

*Jocelyn Moore Gailliot '03
New York City*

Barrett Hazeltine is a kind and loving person. He always cared about you and listened to you. While other professors would be living in the ivory towers and not come down from Mount Olympus to talk with you about your future, ideas, who you are as a person, Barrett was right there on ground zero. "Are we still friends?" he would ask. And he would take the time to listen and help form a plan for your future. When I came to him in the early 1990s to formulate entrepreneurship-

Coorganized by Brown's Simmons Center, the exhibition is in D.C. until June 9, then traveling internationally.

specific classes for Brown students, he loved the idea. He and I set out a syllabus, readings, a list of guest speakers. He loved it because it was all about what the students wanted—they wanted to hear from our alumni and connect. Our alumni wanted to connect with students. This grew into the entrepreneurship program and then a formal degree from Brown. He trusted you to be the best person and encouraged you to one day be the person on the stage sharing your journey—because he wanted to hear it. He cared about you. Thank you, Barrett, for caring. Thank you for listening. Thank you for evolving with the times. Thank you for always being available. I cannot thank you enough.

*Michael Joukowsky '87
Providence, R.I.
michael.joukowsky@ganesa.net*

*Many, many more letters online under
"The Students Behind ENG9"*

WEARING YOUR COMPUTER

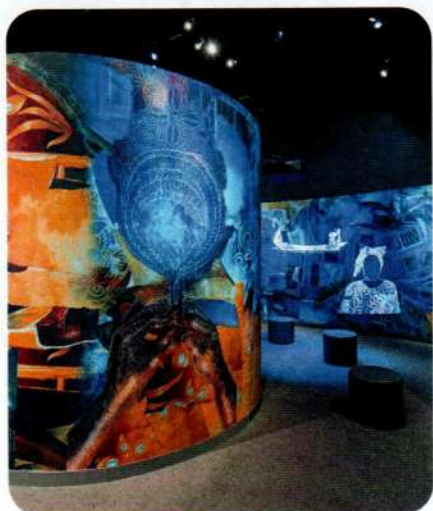
In reference to "Foresight," Beyond the Gates, Jan.-Mar. '25. As head of conservation at the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum, we have been working with Lisa Krohn '85 on how to best mount and display our Cyberdesk [wearable computer, designed by Krohn]. It has been an amazing collaboration and has yielded fruitful insight into materials degradation and design philosophy.

*Sarah Barack '96
South Orange, N.J.*

HONORING DAVID EGILMAN

Thank you for featuring David Egilman '74, '78 MD ("Battling Big Pharma," Obituaries, Nov.-Dec. '24). The class I took with him in 1997 had the generic title of Occupational/Environmental Health. It was really about epistemology and the ways we should critically examine hypotheses and results from testing those hypotheses. Getting to discuss Karl Popper, Michel Foucault, and Thomas Kuhn for the class was a worthwhile and memorable challenge. I am equally grateful for his intellectual contributions to my Brown education and for the inspiration he gave by sharing with his students the whys and hows of his work to advance justice.

*Stephanie Kissam '00
Oak Park, Ill.*



nmaahc and 2 others

...



nmaahc @nmaahc's first international traveling exhibition, "In Slavery's Wake: Making Black Freedom in the World," is now open!

"In Slavery's Wake" reckons with the impact of slavery and colonialism on present-day societies around the world and explores the often-overlooked efforts of the enslaved to force the end of slavery with legal emancipation and abolition. It provides a wellspring for descendants to draw upon to help create a better world for themselves and their communities through art, storytelling, music, protest, and communal healing.

#InSlaverysWake

Mignonette Dooley Johnson/NMAAHC





SAYLES SLAYS: **GRAFFITI-INSPIRED BUBBLE CLOUDS WILL GLOW UP THE 1881 RAFTERS** THIS YEAR THANKS TO "UNSUI (CLOUD FOREST)," AN INSTALLATION BY ARTIST SANFORD BIGGERS. PLUS, **THE MAGNIFICENT 1903 HUTCHINGS-VOTEY ORGAN**—THE LARGEST SUCH STILL IN EXISTENCE—JUST GOT ITS 3,000 PIPES CLEANED.

was concern among workers over freedom of speech. In November 2023, student workers planned a teach-in on Palestine that ran up against the BCSC's policy against making political statements. TWLO aims to protect BCSC members' rights to free speech. "The

ganization, formed in spring 2023.

Through unionization, Brown student workers have secured increases in pay, formalized grievance processes independent from the University, and delineated student worker responsibilities. However, in a December email

his growing family. "In the five years I've been here, my pay has increased by over 65 percent," says Ziegler. "My wife and I are expecting a baby in March, so that makes life a lot easier for us."

"The union is a source of collective power," said president of TALO Yasmine



Jo Ouyang '26, Yasmine Abdelaziz '25, Anna Ryu '25, and Michael Ziegler '26 PhD

Center cannot censor its student workers," said President of TWLO Jo Ouyang '26. "They should feel safe discussing histories, whether it's about Palestine or other communities. Ultimately, our job is to educate students."

The undergraduate unions are joined by the Graduate Labor Organization (GLO) and the Brown Postdoc Labor Or-

to the campus community, the University cited the "national trends toward unionization" as one of the factors in its \$46 million "structural budget deficit" this fiscal year and the subsequent need for University-wide belt-tightening.

For Michael Ziegler '26 PhD, the president of GLO and a classics PhD student, the wins have allowed him to support

Abdelaziz '25. It gives student workers a direct means to hold the University accountable to fair labor practices. Unions are also community hubs, uniting students across departments and dorms.

Seeing her coworkers' commitment drives Ryu's continued involvement. It "reminds me why I do all of this," Ryu said. —BIANCA ELENA ROSEN '25



BENJAMIN MOSHES '25 DESIGNED THE **POPULAR WEBSITE TRACKING** NYC'S (POSSIBLY CANCELED) **CONGESTION-PRICING PROGRAM**.



PROFESSOR OF LITERARY ARTS **KWAME DAWES**, PROLIFIC AUTHOR AND POPULAR CAMPUS TEACHER, IS **JAMAICA'S NEW POET LAUREATE**.



BROWNTOGETHER RAISED **\$4.4B** FROM 77K ALUMNI, PARENTS, AND FRIENDS TO SUPPORT **BROWN'S MISSION OF SERVICE**. THANK YOU.



Under the Elms

MADE students tinkering away in their Barus and Holley studio.

Innovation Lab

A Brown|RISD master's program mixes design and engineering

A student fiddles with a smartwatch designed to prevent accidentally slicing off a finger while cooking. Another compares organic materials that will be turned into compostable single-use packaging. Sarah Fletcher '25 AM and her team work on an external menstrual blood collection device. Their goal? Create a product that can help detect conditions like cervical cancer and endometriosis. The projects are some of many under development in Brown|RISD Master of Arts in Design Engineering (MADE) program.

Brought together by a shared passion for women's health, Fletcher's group comes from an array of academic backgrounds. "When you are working on a problem, everybody comes at it from slightly different angles, and it just makes for a better solution," she says.

This cross-disciplinary collaboration defines the program's pedagogical approach, says Louise Manfredi, director of the Brown Design Workshop and associate professor of engineering. The program's curriculum, specifically the studio component, is designed to equip students to "build bridges across these disciplines and learn to speak the language of some of these other disciplines," says MADE founding executive director and engineering professor of the practice Beth Altringer-Eagle.

For Fletcher, the cohort is instrumental. "I will go to my friends in the program who have graphic design experience and they help me with [Adobe] Illustrator and Photoshop. I've learned a lot of what I know now because of people in our class."

Through their collaboration, Fletcher's team hopes to transform women's health. "We are really excited about being at that forefront," she says.

—DAPHNE DLUZNIEWSKI '26

Saddle Up

For \$250 a semester, students can spend every Saturday on horseback

A 50-degree wind blows through the Newport Polo Club grounds in Portsmouth, R.I., sending red and yellow leaves spinning toward the dry pasture. Alexa Vasquez '27 shivers in her thin Brown Polo Club half-zip. She's moving fast as she braids the tail of a brown mare in pink ankle wraps.

"A lot of the tack is for the horses, to protect them," says Dylan Bush '27 MD, a 29-year-old medical student. Colorful stockings support the horses' ankles. Braided tails can't get caught in polo mallets. "Even the

bald guy can braid," jokes Maguire Anuszewski '23, '27 MD, a med student with more hair on his face than his head.

When Captain Shaurya Singh '25 joined the Polo Club in 2022, the competition team had only four members. Singh made it his mission to get the club back on its feet, starting by ensuring affordability. Today, there are full JV and varsity squads for men and women.

Jamie Campbell '27 was also a key figure in the club's rapid revival. He grew up on a farm in Kentucky where a "polo family" boarded their



A well-exercised McGoo gives Captain Shaurya Singh '25 a nuzzle.



HITS DIFFERENT: IVY LEAGUE FOOTBALL TEAMS MAY NOW COMPETE IN NCAA DIVISION I POST-SEASON PLAY (GO, BEARS!). IN OTHER NEWS, THE LEAGUE RECOMMITTED TO AMATEUR COLLEGE ATHLETICS BY DECLINING TO JOIN AN NCAA ANTITRUST SETTLEMENT THAT ALLOWS COLLEGES TO PAY PLAYERS DIRECTLY.

horses. He rarely played. Then, the summer after his junior year of high school, the boarders asked him to gallop their horses around the pasture. "It's like he becomes a part of the horse. It's like he's a centaur," his mom remembers.

When he came to Brown, he didn't want to stop riding. So he signed up for the Polo Club. At the same time, Newport Polo decided to expand its partnerships with local universities. Campbell stepped up as an organizer, coordinating carpooling and dragging a giant wooden horse to Brown's club fair.

Vasquez had been eyeing the Polo Club on the online list of student activities since before she applied to Brown. "Then I was like, no, it's an Ivy League school; people are probably all really good already." Vasquez is from La Quinta, California, where she grew up watching local polo matches from first grade through the last year of high school. It was as close as she could afford to get to horses.

Brown Polo Club offers lengthy lessons on a farm overlooking the Atlantic for only \$15 weekly. Campbell says there is no other university in the country where polo is so affordable, thanks to the generosity of the U.S. Polo Association, Newport Polo, and external donors.

Lessons end at noon—in time for team brunch. For Vasquez, it's unusual to be up so early. "I wouldn't go to a 9 a.m. lecture," she says, "but I will totally come to 9 a.m. polo." —MEGAN TALIKOFF '25

The first polo club in the U.S. opens its doors to students every Wednesday and Saturday.

Diversity on the Decline

Reactions to demographic changes after 2023's ban on race-conscious admissions

Senior Niyanta Nepal, president of the Undergraduate Council of Students and a minority peer counselor (MPC), expected to see a change in the number of students of color this year, with the first new class admitted after the U.S. Supreme Court's ban on race-conscious admissions. It was still jarring. "We were all shocked by the fact that we saw this major shift," she says.

Brown tried to limit the ruling's impact while staying within the law, but

Nepal describes. Brown calls its approach "testing in context," meaning a student's SAT/ACT scores are considered in the context of their educational environment, which can benefit applicants from under-resourced backgrounds, the ad hoc committee on admissions policies found.

Yet that's not how it felt to many on campus. Noliwe Rooks, chair of the Africana Studies Department, was teaching a class with mostly students of color when news of the testing requirement



in the class of 2028 the share of Black students is down 40 percent; Hispanic students down 29 percent. Nepal says the University is "feeling inaccessible."

The Brown community spent the last year reckoning with what the shift in law means for higher ed. In December, leaders released a plan to sustain diversity as "integral to our mission of academic excellence." It includes enhancing relationships with high schools, guidance counselors, and alumni to connect with applicants from underrepresented backgrounds and making financial aid options more understandable.

But several students and faculty members said Brown's reinstatement last year of a standardized testing requirement contributes to the unease

came out. "What they kept saying is that it just really seems like this school is finding different ways to say they made a mistake letting us in. Of course, the school was not saying that," Rooks says. "It was heartbreaking to me."

Marco Lima '27, a sophomore MPC, says he reminds first-year students experiencing imposter syndrome that with race not a consideration, "you really got here on your own merits." Yet, he says, some wonder "whether the University is really trying to appeal to me."

Skyler Recel-Chang '27, a sophomore MPC, pointed to a "beacon of hope," saying, "I believe a lot of students have formed solidarity with each other, knowing the landscape is shifting." —STEPHANIE GRACE '87



Ringel is double-concentrating in empathy and biology.

Why—and How—Should We Care?

Pre-med senior Myles Ringel does a deep dive into empathy. BY HALEY SANDLOW '25

How does a doctor tell a mother that her 8-year-old son might drop dead without warning?

It's the heartbreaking question Myles Ringel '25 faced while shadowing a genetic cardiologist the summer after his freshman year. After hearing the news, the mother started crying. What happened next profoundly changed how he approaches his own ambition of becoming a doctor.

"It felt rehearsed," Ringel recalls. "[The doctor] seemed like she almost counted to five, offered a tissue, offered her sympathies, counted to five again, and moved on with the appointment, as if nothing really had happened."

The moment got Ringel thinking.

He wanted to better understand what happened in that examination room, how he could build a foundation—outside of his pre-med requirements—for his future career. "What can I bring to medicine?" he says. "What can I bring to the social role that a doctor has in our society that I wouldn't get just being a biology major?"

The answer, Ringel decided, is a formal study of empathy he calls "Empathy in Practice." The independent concentration includes 15 courses, none of which overlap with Ringel's pre-med requirements. "That's what makes this so much more fun," he says, laughing. The course load draws upon more than half a dozen disciplines including anthropology, neuroscience, and literature to investigate the experience of empathy in everyday life.

Empathy is most often studied in psychology, Ringel says, but that's just one piece of the puzzle. His concentration turns to sociology and anthropology to capture the actual experience of empathy, influenced by social circumstance, identity, and even politics.

"DON'T MAKE EYE CONTACT"

Ringel is studying empathy in three main areas—incarceration, homelessness, and racism—and has taken classes specific to each topic. In his studies of the first two, he examines how empathy occurs—or doesn't—with people who are, for all intents and purposes, invisible. Incarcerated people are inaccessible to the general population and unhoused people are socially invisible, says Ringel. "If you grew up in a city you're taught, 'Don't make eye contact,'" he says.

Ringel's work explores why and how those of us who have homes empathize, or avoid empathizing, with homeless people. "Then, from the reverse, what does it mean to be in a class that is systematically removed from the gaze of empathy?"

While empathy is often seen as a good thing, Ringel learned that it's more complex than that. Empathy is a choice, he explains, and sometimes the cost is too high: "If I don't want to feel upset and my friend is crying, I'm going to not empathize with them." The cost can be literal, too, such as when empathy means spending, like making charitable donations. "It hurts to come into contact with hurting people—that's why we turn away from homelessness," says Michael Berman, a lecturer in anthropology who had Ringel as a student in his class *Suffering and Compassion*.

Andrea Flores, an assistant professor of education who is Ringel's concentration advisor, says the importance of balancing the cultivation of empathy with "preserving the individual" comes up in her own research on teachers, who can experience burnout.

Meanwhile, Ringel says, empathy can actually be "really destructive," like in his third area of study, racism. "There's strong research to suggest that racism, very fundamentally, is a product of empathy—of empathizing so strongly with an ingroup that you completely reject the outgroup and harm them."

Empathy can also mean lip service. When people raise empathy as the solution, says Berman, they can get stuck on an imagined connection with suffering people instead of a real engagement with the conditions that produce suffering. That can ironically write out political action.

"NEXT CLIENT, NEXT CLIENT"

Ringel's thesis examines how people navigate empathy in helping professions, such as medicine or law, which he describes as "emotionally demanding jobs where you have little time to process very heavy things." It's something Rin-

gel became familiar with while working with eviction defense lawyers last summer. He often spoke to clients over the phone who had kids, pets, and mental health challenges and no place to go.

"It's devastating," he says, "and to just have that happen, and then great, next client, next client, next client, next client...."

His thesis also includes interviews he conducted with male doctors practicing maternal-fetal medicine. These doctors fundamentally do not understand the experience of being pregnant, Ringel says. So how can they empathize with their patients?

Some "turned it on its head," acknowledging their inability to identify as a way to help patients feel understood. Others brought up their wives' complicated pregnancies or their experiences working with other patients.

It's what Ringel calls "alternative forms of empathy," explaining, "It maintains the compassion and it brings them closer together, but without trying to do something that they can't do."

Regarding his independent concentration, Ringel says, "One of the really exciting things is that I get to be—saying this with all the fistfuls of salt possible—kind of at the forefront of a cross-disciplinary field of empathy."

Ringel says he's more aware of his own empathy—how to practice it now, and in the future when he's a doctor, even when he may not have personal experience related to someone else's distress. Recently, he says, he practiced on the phone with his mother, listening to her talk about her aging parents.

"I just used my ethnography skills a bit," he says—thanks to a course on the techniques social scientists use to put the people they study at ease so as to get the best information. "Just asking why, asking how, asking follow-ups, just being very calm. And trying to get into the same feeling as she was, but also trying to project the care and the compassion. Everyone does that. I just think that now, I am more cognizant of when I'm doing it."

CAN EMPATHY BE BAD?

In a time of political polarization, could the solution be to stop empathizing?

It's the suggestion Ringel makes in an op-ed homework assignment for a class on social neuroscience, taught by Oriel FeldmanHall, associate professor of cognitive, linguistic, and psychological sciences.

As with racism, Ringel explains, mounting political polarization is a product of a twofold process: empathizing with people of similar political affiliation and failing to empathize with those of different affiliations.

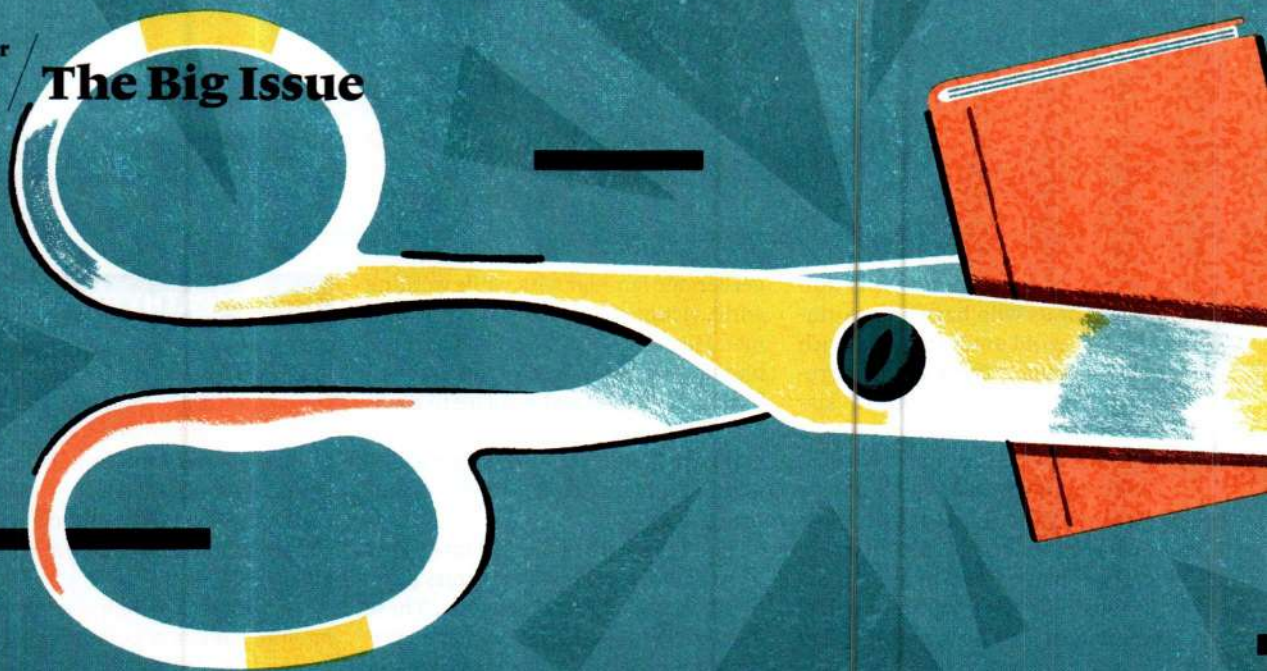
Yet trying to promote empathy across party lines can backfire, according to studies Ringel cites in his piece. Without significant, time-consuming interventions, people asked to empathize with other groups may end up empathizing more with their own group, thus becoming even more antagonistic towards the other.

"Empathizing with someone is an effortful and costly psychological thing that people do," says FeldmanHall, whose lab has studied the process of political polarization in the brain.

"Myles's argument is that in order to fix political polarization, we don't need to understand and feel the distress, the plight, the world of another." What Ringel suggests instead is that we simply make people feel heard—by using techniques such as reflecting back what has been said, asking open-ended questions, and avoiding judgment—and that will calm them down and eventually move more people into the center.

FeldmanHall says Ringel's proposal is "provocative" and contrary to the "big narratives" told in modern politics, which have included "grand calls for having empathy for the other side."

"The point is that interventions [based on empathy] are not working," Ringel says. —H.S.



Don't Read This

How Brown professors and alums are fighting a wave of book bans. BY WILL BUNCH '81

Book banning isn't new in the U.S.—for instance, Judy Blume was widely banned in the 1970s—but there's been a recent spike. In reaction to 2020's mass marches for social justice, "anti-woke" activists led some 10,000 book bans over a two-year period from mid-2021 to mid-2023, according to the literary advocacy group PEN America. Last year, they say, public-school book bans increased by 200 percent. Professors, alumni, and others from Brown—celebrated for its Open Curriculum, encouraging wide-open discourse—are on the front lines of both raising awareness about book banning and fighting back.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Professor Esther Whitfield specializes in modern Cuban literature with a focus on the role of censorship. That's how she came to teach a Brown course titled, simply: Banned Books. She started teaching it in 2022—the year fights over books about race, LGBTQ+ issues, and other topics really exploded—and she has seen student interest in the subject rise steadily since.

The class covers the history of free speech, both in the United States and abroad, outlining the various rationales—once protecting the virtue of women, today more often the innocence of children—used to justify censorship. She assigns students to argue both against and in favor of restrictions.

A class that begins with the warnings of George Orwell

about a dystopian 1984 now leads up to a final session about the real-life book-ban battles raging today, including a visit from librarians in nearby Westerly, R.I., to talk about the pressures they face. "I'm trying to bring in a local face of what happens, and how different parts of the United States experience book banning," Whitfield says.

ON THE FRONT LINE

David Levithan '94 published *Boy Meets Boy*, a young-adult novel about two gay teens that turned the rom-com formula on its head, in 2003. He vividly remembers the libraries that wouldn't stock it, and even a protest at one of his events.

Still, Levithan—an editor at Scholastic who writes frequently for young adults about gay male themes—says objections used to be more personal and sincere. "It was having a conversation with a parent who genuinely believed that their child would go to hell if they read my book," he recalls.

Since 2022, however, Levithan has seen opposition not only grow in intensity but feel a lot more organized and political, led by conservative groups like Moms for Liberty. Levithan says these activists often haven't read the books they are trying to ban.

In helping to organize the group Authors Against Book Bans, Levithan pondered the geographical reach of Moms for Liberty and created a similar structure of local chapters, with some presence in all 50 states.

Levithan sees the fight as a reaffirmation of the values he



nourished as an undergraduate at Brown, that “we fight for these books because we’re fighting for the larger point of intellectual freedom.”

BEHIND THE DESK

After a high-profile career running an imprint for Scholastic, Arthur Levine ’84 left in 2019 to found Levine Querido, a children’s book publisher that focuses on authors from marginalized groups. He understood that the mission would be challenging, but even a veteran like Levine could not have anticipated the book-banning buzzsaw unleashed in the 2020s.

Levine says the typical consumer doesn’t see the insidious ways that a censorious climate affects what gets published or widely circulated, as publishers kill controversial book ideas before they ever get printed, or as librarians decline to stock new titles that might get them in trouble. “The way this impacts readers is that they are not getting certain books,” Levine explains. He and his firm are doing what they can to fight book bans, including by working with the Independent Book Publishers Association on a program called We Are Stronger Than Censorship, which buys and distributes extra copies of books that have been banned.

Levine credits Brown professors like Elizabeth Weed, a co-founder of the Pembroke Center for Research and Teaching on Women, with showing a kid from a predominantly Jewish neighborhood in Queens how to appreciate the power of voices and experiences other than his own. “I have this idea,” he says, “that beauty and truth come from all different places.”

IN THE CONSTITUTION

For Corey Brettschneider, a leading U.S. constitutional scholar, coming to teach on College Hill meant following in the footsteps of a man he considers a beacon: 20th-century free-speech pioneer Alexander Meiklejohn, class of 1893 and namesake of the Meiklejohn peer advising program.

Brettschneider, author of books such as the recent *The*

Presidents and the People, which traces threats to constitutional rights from the nation’s leaders going back to the era of John Adams, says that the push by modern conservatives to yank books from library shelves proves Meiklejohn’s central thesis that free speech is essential to a functioning democracy.

Assaults on reading, or public debate, are ultimately “a shutdown of democratic governance by the force of regulation,” Brettschneider says. “When the government starts to criminalize speech, it’s an attempt to shut down dissent.”

Yet Brettschneider notes his research shows that every wave of government repression has been pushed back and mostly undone by opposition, often from grassroots movements, like those fighting right-wing school boards today.

AT MIDDLE SCHOOL

For Meg Wolitzer ’81, the ability to write with empathy about people with different life experiences resulted in acclaimed novels such as *The Wife*. Her success didn’t prepare her for the reaction to her 2019 young adult novel, *To Night Owl from Dogfish*. The story, coauthored with Holly Goldberg Sloan, is told through letters between two 12-year-old girls whose gay dads are dating each other.

The novel got excellent reviews and positive recommendations from officials in a half-dozen states from Georgia to Washington. So, it was something of a shock when four years later, she learned that it was getting pulled off school library shelves in Iowa, after the enactment of a state law that banned books dealing with sexual orientation from K-12 schools. The negative listing of *To Night Owl from Dogfish* spread like a virus to other states.

It didn’t matter, as Wolitzer noted, that there’s no depiction of homosexual acts in the book. It was a first for Wolitzer in more than 40 years as a novelist, and an assault on those core values she learned at Brown. “If you’re denying kids access to finding out about other people’s lives and their families, it’s a great, great shame and a tragedy,” Wolitzer says.



On air: Will Malloy '25,
Nat Hardy '23, and Megan
Hall '04, '15 MPH

Bite-Sizing Climate Action

A Brown-based podcast fights climate-change overwhelm, one “let’s break this down” episode at a time. BY MICHAEL BLANDING

Climate change coverage by its nature tends to be gloomy—a relentless march of temperature and sea level rises tending toward seemingly inevitable collapse. While that clear-eyed realism is important, says Brown ecology professor Stephen Porder, it can be paralyzing as well. So when Rhode Island Public Radio general manager Torey Malatia called him to thank him for a recent donation five years ago, he took the opportunity to pitch him on an idea for a radio podcast that would address the issue in a more positive light.

“It wasn’t about trying to convince people that climate change was real, it was about things people could do that would actually be helpful,” says Porder. Malatia connected him with local radio producer Megan Hall ’04, ’15 MPH, and together they created *Possibly*, a podcast and radio show featuring short episodes (clocking in around four minutes) that strive to be as entertaining as they are informative about everyday actions people can take to address environmen-

tal sustainability. “We’re trying to show people they can be hopeful and proactive,” says Porder, who is also Brown’s assistant provost for sustainability.

“Our intent is really to sort through all of the noise and say here’s what’s worth paying attention to, and here are things you don’t need to obsess about,” adds Hall, who teaches a course at Brown, *Podcasting for the Common Good: Storytelling with Science*. Since 2019, the show has aired more than 268 episodes, appearing at times as a segment during National Public Radio’s *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* programs on 40 stations in 20 states, as well as a stand alone podcast on Apple, Spotify, and other platforms. From the beginning, the Brown-based program has also been a training ground for student journalists interested in science communication, teaching them how to promote essential content with breezy delivery.

That tone was set from the first program, says Hall, when two students came in with a script about plastic straws that came across as stilted and formal. Before taping, Hall suggested they have a casual conversation instead, and it turned

>250

NUMBER OF EPISODES **POSSIBLY HAS PRODUCED SINCE 2019**. CONTACT THE POSSIBLY TEAM WITH YOUR CLIMATE QUESTION AT ASKPOSSIBLY.COM.

out to be so much more engaging that they decided on a lightly scripted conversational style as the format of the show. Through their collaboration, Porder and Hall aim to strike the right balance between precision and listenability. "I'll rewrite a sentence to make it more audio-friendly," says Hall, "then he'll rewrite it to make it more scientifically accurate, and then I'll rewrite it again. I really appreciate the back and forth we have."

REACHING A WIDER AUDIENCE

Most *Possibly* episodes include conversations with experts, frequently Brown faculty, who relish sharing their research with a wider audience. "I appreciate the opportunities to reach outside of campus and show how research can be of interest beyond the classroom," says Bathsheba Demuth, an environmental historian of the Arctic who appeared on a segment about the idea of wilderness. After it was aired on a station in Alaska, the state office of the National Parks Service contacted her to collaborate on new public-facing materials about the Alaskan wilderness.

Baylor Fox-Kemper, an environmental sciences professor and a lead author on the most recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, commends *Possibly* for filling a unique niche in [climate change](#) communication. "We've shifted from 60 percent of people not believing climate change is real to 75 percent of people believing it is real, but a large fraction of them feel like there is nothing they can do about it," he says. "I think they've hit the right tone in breaking through that communication barrier."

Possibly employs around ten student reporters, who pitch

ideas, interview experts, and go out into the field to investigate local environmental issues before writing, recording, and editing their segments. Lead reporter Will Malloy '25 joined the program after taking Hall's class as a sophomore. A double concentrator in English and ecology, he was frustrated about the lack of opportunities to share research outside the ivory tower. "It's awesome if we're coming up with climate solutions, but it doesn't really matter unless we can get those ideas out into the rest of the world," says Malloy, who among other topics has interviewed farmers about climate change's impact on maple syrup production and examined the environmental impact of instant coffee versus espresso pods.

Working on the podcast is a crash course on how to communicate complex ideas to the public, Malloy says. "You can say a specific action emits X amount of CO₂, but how much is 5 tons of CO₂ versus 5,000 tons?" he says. He's learned to use analogies—for example, saying emissions are equivalent to five plane trips from New York to L.A.—or using percentages rather than amounts.

A LEGACY IN THE MAKING

A growing cohort of *Possibly* alums have gone on to use the skills they've gained in work as science communicators. Molly Magid '19 was one of the first student reporters with the podcast and now works as a communications manager at an environmental nonprofit in New Zealand. "One of the big things I took away is that just because the environment is a serious topic doesn't mean it needs to be treated seriously all the time," says Magid, who now produces the podcast *Big Biology*, in which two biologists interview colleagues about their discoveries.

Fatima Husain '17 was a science editor for the *College Hill Independent* while at Brown and joined *Possibly* as an advisor to students as she was pursuing a master's in science writing at MIT. "It was the opportunity of a lifetime," she says now. "Working hard to uphold standards was an incredibly formative experience in making me a better journalist and enriched my reporting significantly." Now a PhD student in geochemistry at MIT, she uses skills she picked up at *Possibly* while teaching a class on environmental policy.

Other alums have gone into journalism, including Max Kozlov '20, a science reporter at *Nature*, and Luci Jones '23, a production assistant at Wonder Media Network, a New York-based audio studio focusing on women's stories. One of the most recent *Possibly* alums, Janek Schaller '24, is currently an editorial fellow at Midstory, a nonprofit media organization focusing on the Midwest, where he is working on a podcasting series about agricultural innovation and the future of farming. Schaller notes that while print media is struggling, podcasts continue to thrive, presenting a unique opportunity to educate the public on environmental issues. "People find the human voice inherently compelling," he says. "They are inclined to listen."

LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE

A few questions that *Possibly* answers (each of these is one four-minute episode):

- Is it worth it to buy organic meat?
- What's happening to all of the insects?
- What kind of water heater should I buy?
- Do my clothes release harmful particles when I wash them?
- Is using a soda maker more energy efficient than buying seltzer by the can?
- Are white roofs really "cool"?
- How can you reduce the environmental "pawprint" of your cat?
- Can you really compost compostable plastic?
- What is the most environmentally friendly option for diapers?
- How do I ditch my lawn?
- What happened to acid rain?
- Is cremation or burial more environmentally friendly?

IS CAREERISM RUINING COLLEGE?

The race to position yourself in a tight job market now takes over every college summer vacation, and even high school seniors ask professors how they can get a leg up. As college costs rise, how much should Gen Z students be emphasizing career prep? And what might be lost?

By Will Bunch '81

Illustrations by David Plunkert



N

yria Delph '28 was the muckraking editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper at Overland High School in Aurora, Colorado, so her biology teacher was a little surprised when Delph asked for a letter of recommendation for Brown around her plans to be a pre-med student. "You'd be a great doctor," she recalls the teacher saying, "but I see you more as a reporter."

But Delph, part of the first generation in her family to attend college, wanted to keep pushing on both fronts. After high school, she did the summer journalism program at Princeton and immediately joined the *Brown Daily Herald* when she arrived on College Hill last September, even as she also joined the Black Pre-Med Society, volunteered at a Rhode Island health program, and attended a medical conference on suturing.

"I wrote in my application [to Brown], the Open Curriculum gives me the opportunity to be a risk taker," Delph says, and so far she's living up to that. But she admits that some of her friends on campus who share her med-school ambitions don't understand why she toils for the newspaper or her idea that she might take a gap year after Brown. Some, she says, began pushing for the right internships or other resume boosters not long after freshman orientation, including one who was cold-calling her new professors for recommendations. She laughs as she recalls telling them, "Guys, we don't know anything yet."

Delph's tightrope act of pushing forward with her career goal in medicine yet also making the most of Brown's opportunities to chase scoops in daily journalism, along with taking classes in the humanities, epitomizes a nationwide debate that is increasingly defining college life for undergraduates at the midpoint of the 2020s.

The fundamental questions: Have the scales of academia—weighed down by soaring tuition and the expensive real world that awaits Gen Z college grads—tipped too far toward pre-professionalism, a term for careerism on steroids? And are students too focused on getting into the right campus clubs

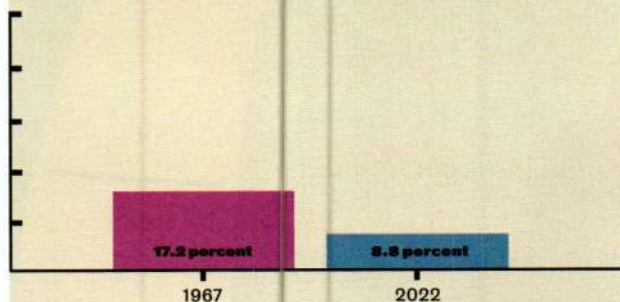
and nabbing the perfect internships to reap the advantages of a diverse, liberal-arts education?

For Sangeeta Bhatia '90, liberal arts and high-level career success are not contradictory concepts—they're directly related. While Bhatia says her parents told her she could choose from three careers, doctor, engineer, or entrepreneur (she became all three, with a PhD to boot), she feels her coursework in humanities was key to her ultimate success as a biomedical entrepreneur. Bhatia runs her own cancer nanotechnology lab at MIT and has launched eight biotech companies. In 2014 she won the Lemelson-MIT prize, known as "the Oscar for inventors." She says her time on College Hill helped convince her that science cannot advance without an appreciation for art and the humanities.

"I describe the process of invention as a bit like

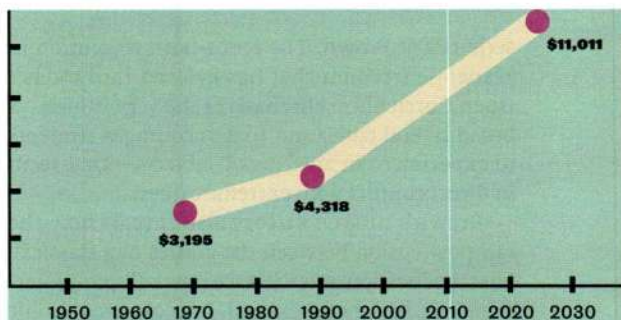
Humanities majors

Since about the time of the Open Curriculum, there has been a 49 percent decrease in humanities majors.



SOURCE: AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

1967 NUMBERS ARE FOR TRADITIONAL HUMANITIES: ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, HISTORY, LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES OTHER THAN ENGLISH (INCLUDING LINGUISTICS AND CLASSICAL STUDIES), AND PHILOSOPHY. 2022 NUMBER INCLUDES NEW HUMANITIES, LIKE GENDER STUDIES. TRADITIONAL HUMANITIES PERCENTAGE FOR 2022 IS 3.7%.



The skyrocketing price of college

The cost of one year of public college, adjusted for inflation, has seen a 244.68% increase since 1969.

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

writing a song,” Bhatia says. “You start in one direction and make it up as you go. You form collabs with others. You riff. Creating something out of nothing and imagining the future requires inspiration—and to be inspired, students need to be exposed to as much outside of their field as in it.”

Yet Bhatia’s belief that liberal-arts exposure was essential to her success as an innovator and earner isn’t reflected in the paths many Gen-Z undergrads are taking. The popularity of career-path majors such as business or computer science has skyrocketed as enrollment in subjects such as sociology or English literature has plunged to record-low levels. A trend toward layoffs or department closures on some campuses, even as some small liberal-arts schools are shuttered entirely, provoked a story that exploded last September. That’s when a 2023 University of Pennsylvania grad and law student, Isabella Glassman, published her widely read and provocative *New York Times* op-ed: “Careerism Is Ruining College.”

“I’d wake up at 3:30 a.m. from the recurring nightmare that I didn’t land an internship my junior year summer,” Glassman wrote. “I heard people, maybe friends, endlessly discussing the ‘only way’ to be successful. I consoled a sobbing roommate after she failed to land the job her parents expected her to get.” The Penn alumna’s article chronicled the surge of students (herself included) studying microeconomics, vying for elite summer internships on Wall Street or Silicon Valley or Capitol Hill, or getting crushed by rejection from elite societies like Yale’s investing club. And it launched a national conversation about pre-professionalism and a potential link to rising rates of depression among college students, even—or especially—on elite campuses.

NOT A NEW DEBATE

One could argue that this debate has been taking place since Italy’s University of Bologna handed out the first degree in the early 1000s. The question that’s always lurked underneath: What is college really for? Should higher education focus on narrow career skills—from building ancient stone bridges to today’s coding for artificial intelligence—or a well-rounded liberal curriculum that hones critical thinking skills and a love for the arts? In recent years, the popular, idealistic stance has been to herald the higher purpose of the university as a mold of tomorrow’s great thinkers and citizens, even as rising financial ambition fuels applications for Goldman Sachs internships and lengthy LinkedIn profiles at age 18.

In his 2005 commencement address at Stanford University, the late Apple cofounder Steve Jobs told the story of how he indulged his love for the art of calligraphy in his coursework and during his free time as an undergraduate at Reed College, without any sense there’d be a connection to his bigger career ambitions in tech.

“I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can’t capture, and I found it fascinating,” he said. “None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But 10 years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac.”

Yet even as graduates at Silicon Valley’s flagship university were applauding Jobs’s lofty message, societal trends were undercutting it. A tougher job market, the ever-rising costs of large cities where the best opportunities were centered, and the exorbitant hikes in tuition convinced many young people that a four-year-long laser focus on the most lucrative career is what’s required in modern America.

Consider this: For decades, researchers at UCLA conducted a nationwide survey of incoming college freshmen to gauge their attitudes. In 1969, after two decades of pros-

"IN THE '20S AND '30S, YOU WENT TO SCHOOL BECAUSE YOU'RE A GUY, YOU'RE WHITE, AND IT'S WHERE YOU MET AND NETWORKED WITH OTHER WHITE GUYS WHO COULD AFFORD IT."

perity in which tuition at thriving public universities was low, or even nonexistent, a whopping 83 percent of first-year students told the survey that a chief purpose of college is "to develop a meaningful philosophy of life." But that number had already fallen to just 41 percent by the Wall Street–crazed mid-1980s. Over the same period, first-year students who said they were at college to become "financially well-off" soared from 43 percent to 75 percent.

These trends have only accelerated in the 21st century. In 2022, the humanities accounted for just 8.8 percent of all bachelor's degrees, down from 15 percent in 2005, the year of Jobs's stirring commencement speech, while schools such as Marymount University and St. John's University have cut liberal-arts majors and minors. But even those stark statistics don't fully capture today's angst for many students as a competitive infrastructure of increasingly selective clubs, internships, and other extracurricular programs makes the career pipeline a lurking, everyday presence in the modern college experience.

Jocelyn Frelier, the associate director of the Brown in Washington program, who works closely every semester with a dozen or so Brown undergraduates working for credits on Capitol Hill or elsewhere in the vast bazaar of Beltway politics, says a couple of years ago she was "amazed" to get summer emails from just-accepted applicants asking what they should be doing "now" to later nab a top D.C. internship. "They had been at Brown for five minutes and they were already thinking about internships," she recalls. She drafted a universal response to "get settled and call me in a year."

Frelier, who wrote an op-ed for *Inside Higher Ed* in response to Glassman's explosive essay in which she urged college administrators to do more to tamp down careerist anxiety, worries that today's students have been raised to be judged largely by their accomplishments, compounded by the financial demands of an unequal U.S. society. "I think students feel pressured to chart a course and stay on it and never look back," she says, even as she notes one of the actual successes for a program like Brown in Washington is when students discover that maybe politics, or a specific type of job in Congress, actually isn't for them after all.

Indeed, even while Frelier and other Brown administrators amp up career-focused offerings such as internship, they stress the so-called "soft skills" that Brown students develop as they move toward adulthood. Frelier says another recent victory was working with a student who wanted to use her time in the capital to not just add a political job on her resume but to finally learn how to cook in an off-campus apartment. "I like to diversify the idea of what achievement can look like—like the idea that you made a veggie lasagna from scratch," she says.

HOW THE OPEN CURRICULUM FITS IN

This debate over pre-professionalism—whether its pursuit has gone too far and what to do about it—is now taking place on campuses across America, but it is taken especially

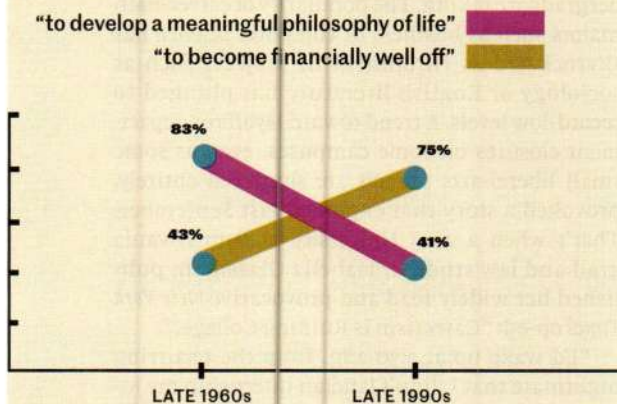
seriously at Brown. The 1960s-born revolution in academic freedom that has evolved into today's Open Curriculum emphasizes the very values—a broad liberal education that encourages students to experiment in an array of subjects—that seem in direct conflict with extreme careerism.

Brown's unique history also reveals how the campus tension between the allures of a classical, liberal education and what we now call pre-professionalism has always existed. It might seem ironic today, but the 400-page 1968 report by then-undergraduates Elliot Maxwell '68 and Ira Magaziner '69 that led to the Open Curriculum—which ended rigid requirements for courses outside a student's major, lowered the number of credits for graduation, opened up a pass/fail option, and expanded interdisciplinary seminar-style courses—slammed what it saw back then as "narrow professionalism."

What was initially called the New Curriculum—at first at odds with Brown's then-president Ray Heffner, who said "the University is not a participatory democracy," and which was won only after large student protests—came to define the Ivy

What is college for?

Annual survey of incoming first-year students



SOURCE: THE COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH CENTER

League campus in the latter part of the 20th century amid its growing popularity and a new and improved image as a bastion of liberal learning.

And yet almost from the very first semesters of the Open Curriculum, Brown and its leaders were pushed to balance this liberal approach with the growing career pressures of the American economy. In the spring of 1974, with long gas lines and a brutal job market, two undergraduates convinced Professor Barrett Hazeltine to launch the class then known as ENGN 9, which aimed to teach

IS BROWN CAVING TO THE TREND?

In 2021, Brown President H. Christina Paxson called for a sweeping review and overhaul of career services for students, which culminated in 2023 with the announcement of a new Center for Career Exploration. It replaced a cluster of older programs like CareerLAB and offered both more staff and a much more targeted strategy, with programs to advise students not just in the traditional pre-med but also in technology and tech ventures, finance and consulting, arts and media, science and engineering, as well as careers in the common good. On its surface, the announcement might look to outside observers that Brown had unconditionally surrendered to the new world of pre-professional demands.

But Matthew Donato, the center's first director and associate dean of the college, argues that the new reality is much more nuanced. He says by helping undergraduates connect more with alumni and get smarter career counseling while on campus, the center will also give them more confidence to take full advantage of the Open Curriculum and learn about the wider world.

"We want to align career exploration with the Open Curriculum," Donato says. "That is really, really important—understanding that these two things aren't mutually exclusive, that you don't have to ignore your career to fully engage academically, and that you know you can focus on career things alongside the things you love to study." He says the roots of the Center for Career Exploration began even before Paxson's push for a reorganization, during the depths of the pandemic in 2020. The abrupt cancellation of that year's summer internships inspired Brown's advisors to scramble to create new networks with alumni who created online seminars, including one called BrownConnect Summer, as well as other programs for then-homebound undergrads.

The new center's three-word mantra, Donato said, is "reflection, connection, and exploration." It's a strategy that aims to help students better understand how their own aptitude and life goals might match with career paths after



Brown, with an emphasis on building on prior programs like BrownConnect to forge even stronger ties between students, successful alumni, and interested faculty. The center provides counseling to help students make the best career choices while also taking advantage of the liberal arts opportunities afforded by the university.

Donato acknowledges that the center—backed by initiatives such as \$5 million for the Summer/Semester Projects for Research, Internships, and Teaching (SPRINT) program, which creates focused learning experiences on campus—does mark something of an acknowledgement of how the world has changed since the New Curriculum heyday of George Morgan and Ira Magaziner. Back then, he says, "there was an expectation that you would probably end up with a fantastic career but...it didn't used to be an orientation of the school." Students believed "it would kind of work itself out, or fall into place."

But the liberal arts remain a strong priority for Brown, even as it also promotes its amped-up career services. In recent years, for example, the University has steadily increased the number and size of its Richard B. Salomon Faculty Research Awards, which highlight work in a variety of fields, especially the humanities such as creative writing or drama. —W.B.

"AS SOON AS I SET FOOT AT BROWN, I WAS BLASTED WITH ALL THESE [PRE-PROFESSIONAL] CLUBS. IT WAS LIKE, YOU NEED TO CHECK A BOX AND JUMP THROUGH THESE HOOPS."

managerial entrepreneurship as a different kind of liberal art. Brown also added its medical school in the 1970s—some objected to medical education as “career prep” at the time—but with an innovative twist that admitted top high school seniors for an eight-year accelerated program meant to encourage them to take more electives as undergrads.

Arnold Weinstein, professor emeritus of comparative literature, arrived at Brown in 1968—just in time to play a key role in the invention of what is now the Open Curriculum, working with the legendary professor George Morgan to meld science, literature, and philosophy in new interdisciplinary programs such as a “Human Studies” major. Weinstein, who taught for 54 years, says that Morgan—who died in 2023 at age 98—taught him that “you can’t truly understand your discipline until you leave it.”

Weinstein has spent his latter years as something of an evangelist for the great books, once lecturing Yale med-school students on “Why Read Kafka?” and writing a 2022 essay in the *Brown Daily Herald* pleading for more students to study literature. He wrote that “important books shine a unique beam on human behavior, thought, and feeling. Reading these books adds something unique not only to our database but to our actual identity. For we’re never through discovering who we are.”

Yet Weinstein’s battle is an uphill climb. While his life in academia has overlapped with steep declines in once-popular majors like philosophy and sociology (which were 4 percent of all bachelor degrees in 1972 but barely 1 percent today), there has been a corresponding rise in campus groups closely tied to career preparation, especially in the most lucrative fields such as finance or entrepreneurship.

EXPLORING VS. NETWORKING

At Brown, the 2000s heralded the arrival of pre-professional clubs that now include Brown Consulting Club, Brown Finance Club, and Brown Investment Group, as well as affinity groups for Black or Latino students preparing for careers in business or medicine. “We try to help guide people in education and mentorship,” explains Thomas Yun ’26, the operations manager of the Brown Investment Group, who is studying applied math and economics and is leaning toward a career in finance after also weighing military service.

The group’s efforts include a competition—sponsored by James Kovacs ’11 and James Hollier ’18, founders of the New York-based investment manager Silver Beech—that aims to expose students to finance outside the classroom. The students pick a publicly traded company and make a pitch, and the four finalists have the opportunity to present before accomplished alumni. “It gives them a relationship they can build upon and some exposure in the real world,” Kovacs says.

Emily Hipchen, director of the nonfiction writing program at Brown, noted there’s a back-to-the-future element in this push for networking, reminiscent of the old-boy connections that characterized higher education prior to 1944’s

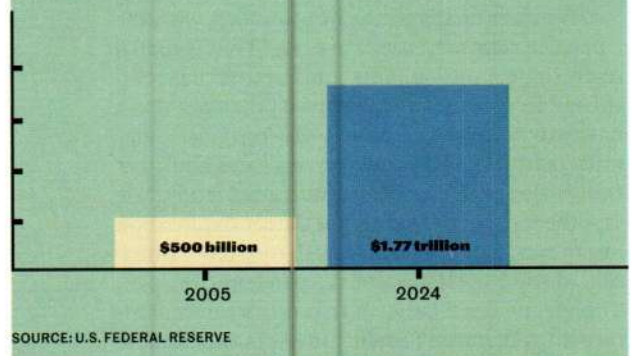
enactment of the G.I. Bill that triggered a more egalitarian era on campus. “In the ’20s and ’30s, you went to school because you’re a guy, you’re white, and it’s where you met and networked with other white guys who could afford it,” she says. “It supported the kinds of friendships that gave you access to power and money. It didn’t matter if you had a job because you weren’t looking for skills, you were looking for buddies.”

The good news is that today’s pre-professionalism isn’t restricted to a certain class of elite white young men, but the bad news is that it’s driven by a sense of economic urgency attached to making the right connections and boosting one’s profile on LinkedIn, the career-oriented platform where today 20 percent of the users are aged 18–24. Nationally, student debt has soared from about \$500 billion in 2005, the year that Jobs spoke at Stanford, to a whopping \$1.77 trillion in 2024, according to the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Students weighed down by these loans also know the best jobs for repaying them tend to concentrate in expensive places like Silicon Valley, New York, or Washington, with astronomical housing costs. The burdens come down hardest on middle-class kids, especially Black and brown students, who might be from the first generation in their family to attend a university and who thus

Total student debt

There has been a 254 percent increase in student debt since 2005 alone.

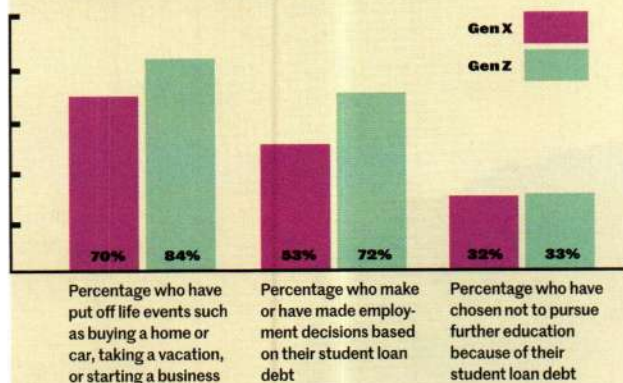


want to make the most of their opportunity.

“The days of being a lifeguard at your local beach...those are gone,” says Brad Gibbs ’93, ’18 MAT, a senior lecturer in the economics department who teaches classes in corporate finance and financial institutions. “That just doesn’t happen anymore.” Instead, Gibbs says he sifts through emails from students asking him about working

The impact of student debt

From Gen X to Gen Z, student debt has had an increased effect on major life decisions.



SOURCE: EDUCATION DATA INITIATIVE

on summer research projects, even if he wonders how much the inquiries are geared toward resume building as opposed to a genuine passion for economics. The former English major at Brown, who headed investment banking for Morgan Stanley in South Africa before returning to academia, says one problem is that many top Wall Street firms start recruiting student talent when they are just sophomores. “You can’t decide your senior year that, ‘Oh, now I want to go do this,’ because you’re too late,” Gibbs says. “They’ve already hired from their junior summer analysts who they selected in sophomore spring.”

In her *New York Times* essay, the recent Penn grad Glassman discusses the dark underbelly of this competitive environment, arguing that there’s likely a link between pre-professional pressures and a doubling from 2010 to 2020 in the number of young adults aged 18 to 25 reporting a major depressive episode, as well as a study in which two-thirds of college students said they’d felt “overwhelming anxiety” in the last year.

At Brown, many new students who picked Providence over other elite college destinations say the promise of academic exploration embedded in the Open Curriculum is what drew them up College Hill, yet they felt the cross-currents of pre-professionalism almost immediately. “As soon as I set foot at Brown, I was blasted with all these clubs” as well as with information about corporate internships, recalls Hans Xu ’26, who is studying a combination of applied math, economics, and international affairs and recently interned with the U.S. Trade Representative through the Brown in Washington program. “It was like, you need to

check a box and jump through these hoops.”

Today, students who arrive in Providence with a pure and focused love for the arts or humanities or the social sciences understand they are bucking the headwinds of careerism. Brown senior Giuseppe Canta ’25, an Italian native raised in Naples and the United Arab Emirates, crossed the Atlantic because the Open Curriculum offers such a stark contrast to the academic rigidity he saw on European campuses. He has stuck with the subject he arrived most passionate about, philosophy, while adding a second major in comparative literature. He hopes to stay at Brown for his philosophy master’s degree and, down the road, navigate the tight job market of academia. “I’m very grateful that my parents support me,” Canta says, “because it’s not the thing that’s the easiest to make a living off, but they’ve always prioritized my happiness.”

Writing program director Hipchen argues that the secret power of a college degree isn’t the sum of its Wall Street internships but its gift of “a hothouse space” of interesting ideas and people. “It’s the personal richness that you find in the intersections of the classes you take, the late night conversations you have with people about things that may never show up again after you leave college,” she says. “I am entirely not who I was when I went to college, because of college.”

Indeed, the ultimate irony of pre-professionalism in the 2020s is that hiring executives at major corporations increasingly seek graduates with the kinds of critical thinking, communications, or just basic life skills that emerge from a top-flight liberal education rather than narrowly focused knowledge about current computer coding.

“Liberal arts is more relevant now than ever because we don’t know what the jobs of 10, 20, or 30 years from now are going to look like,” Matthew Donato, the career center head, says. “Look at AI and the types of jobs and opportunities that new technology has created. People a decade ago weren’t talking about the types of jobs that exist in AI now. I believe the skills that students learn through a broad liberal arts education are critical to being flexible, to being adaptable, and to preparing students to navigate their future careers.”

“I teach environmental science and quite honestly, fifteen years ago, the number one question was ‘What the heck do I do with this degree? It might as well be poetry,’” says Dawn King, Brown’s deputy dean of the college for curriculum and a senior lecturer in environment and society. “I had a student who double-concentrated in economics and environmental studies. When she got a really competitive job at Fidelity in New York, she said, ‘Do you want to know why I got this job? Because I was competing against all econ majors. I was the only one who also had an environmental science degree.’ That’s what made the difference.”

Will Bunch ’81 is national opinion columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer and author of several books including 2023’s After the Ivory Tower Falls. His family once owned a small business college. Additional reporting by Lorraine Ali.

INFLUEN



CE.

Big brands chase after social media content creators because they can change the way other people think. Meet six current students and Gen-Z alums who are documenting their work, their expertise, even their day-to-day lives, for a global audience.

BY ETHAN PAN '22

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY
SIMON SIMARD**

Left, Georga-Kay Whyte '23 AM, '28 PhD, advises about grad school. Right, Kaiti Yoo '22 produces a series of scripted digital shorts.



Clockwise from top left: Jae Ahn '24, Lauren Eusebio '25, Sarah Frank '25, and Yomi Adegbile '26.

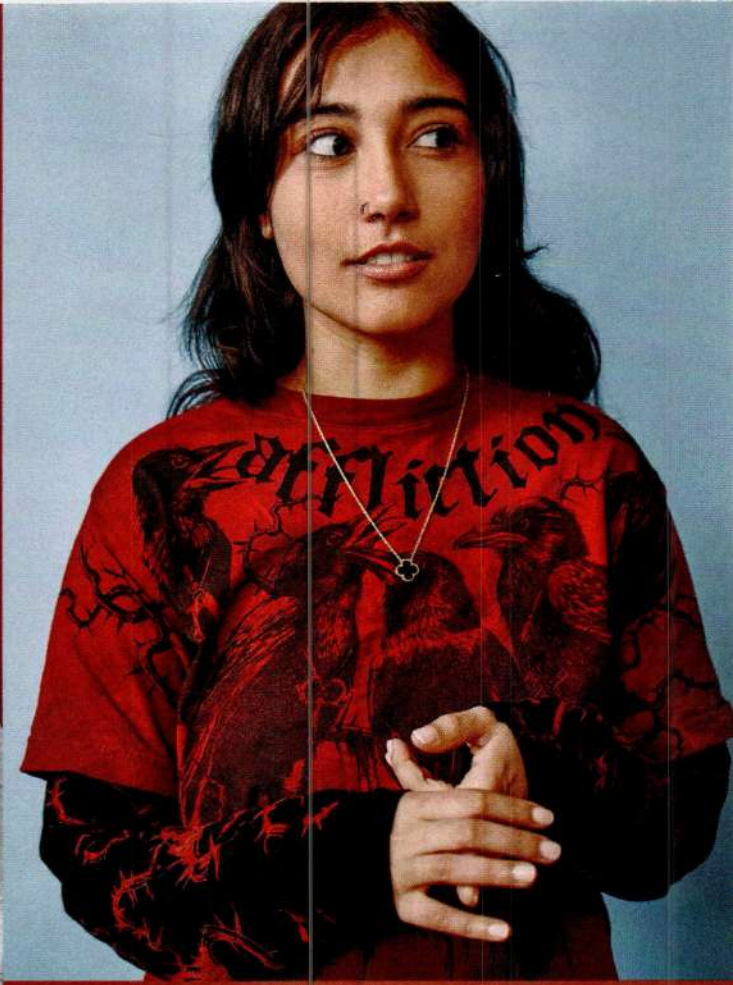
ADMIT IT:

You think of an “influencer” as a certain character that makes money promoting brands and producing social media content of debatable societal value. If you’re older, you probably think of it as a Gen Z thing; if you’re Gen Z, you probably agree. And that’s fair. The MrBeasts and Charli D’Amelios of our world easily fall into that definition. What’s not as evident is that some of these influencers are college students and a few are roaming Brown’s campus.

To be clear, most don’t identify with the profession (they have the same conception of it as we all do). Instead they’re “content creators,” spending their precious hours shooting, editing, and posting videos on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. Their influence is undeniable, though, with their audience sizes ranging from a couple thousand followers (mind you, that’s basically Brown’s campus population) to well over a million (like Lauren Eusebio ’25). They’re not only getting recognized on campus; they’re inspiring students to attend Brown. In some ways, they’re the University’s front-line representatives.

So why do it? Some make great money; most don’t. But outside of profit, these creators have myriad motivations for maintaining their platforms: to attain future career opportunities; to have an emotional outlet; yes, sometimes to gain validation but even more often to foster a sense of connection. And in return, they offer their audiences hard-to-find expertise, guidance, and inspiration; a hearty laugh; and again, connection—connection that, as some of them would argue, can make just as tangible of an impact on their followers’ lives as “real-life” relationships.

The following Brown content creators, including current students and recent alumni, span a wide breadth of content types and goals, just like influencers at large. And like social media at large, you can look away from their work, but looking away doesn’t stop their influence from going on without you.





The Adviser

Georga-Kay Whyte '23 AM, '28 PhD

*Main accounts: @scholasticbabe on
TikTok and YouTube*

A third-year PhD student in the history department, Whyte began to document her life on YouTube as a hobby while she was an undergraduate at Agnes Scott College. She became more serious about video production, including expanding to TikTok, after watching graduate student content creators to learn about the PhD application process. Whyte's vlogs and advice videos target students from underrepresented backgrounds, but she wonders how her social media presence may be viewed by her colleagues in academia.

"Even now, I haven't explicitly talked to anybody in my academic circle about my YouTube channel. It isn't a huge center of my work because so much of my work is just research, but I want to get more confident in owning it because I sometimes feel like in more traditional academic spheres, some people look down on those who do social media. I've even seen people comment—not on my

own personal channels—that if you have time to do it, then you're not taking your work seriously enough. In this ivory tower-type world, there's such an emphasis on rigor and academic publishing. I just don't feel like those things and social media are mutually exclusive.

"I really do feel like there needs to be more representation. I didn't know what a PhD would look like. I never saw anyone in my family do it. I never saw anyone that I was close to do it. So if you don't have that, how do you make that decision to go forward? I feel like it's a part of my practice for other marginalized students to see themselves and think, 'Wait, I can do that.' I constantly correspond with viewers over email or Zoom—people who are first-gen and have no one else to talk to. Even though I don't have a huge presence, the presence that I do have, it's so meaningful to me."



The Documentarian

Jae Ahn '24

Main accounts: @keys on YouTube

Ahn began making videos in the sixth grade but he only began featuring himself in front of the camera and posting them online while attending Brown. Despite his camera shyness, his vlog-style YouTube videos have followed his journey from life on campus to working as an analyst at a credit hedge fund in New York. He focuses on the cinematography of his filmmaking but also recognizes the emotional impact of his work.

"I always tried to get into journaling, but I frankly didn't like writing things out, so I started making videos with my friends—skiing videos or going on trips—and that's how it all started. Eventually I decided to make a couple day-in-the-life videos because, maybe in 10, 15, 20 years, I could show them to my kids and grandkids. Suddenly I was gaining thousands of subscribers a day.

"It's a public journal for me. It's a video documentary on myself where I talk about my candid thoughts and feelings. And those thoughts and feelings tend to cover topics like burnout at Brown or mental health or loneliness. These topics aren't things that people honestly talk about much. I've had friends actually reach out to me after watching my videos, saying,

'Hey, I had no idea you were going through these things.'

"It's quite emotionally taxing. Let's say I filmed a video three months ago and I'm editing it now, but the topic of that video was about how lonely I felt at that moment. When I'm writing the script and doing the voiceover, I have to engender those feelings again and remind myself how I felt. It's stressful posting videos sometimes, but nothing good really comes easy. I love creating my art and putting it out there, and I actually can feel a lot of peace because I feel like I'm finally unwrapping whatever I'm struggling with and actually tackling that issue rather than just kind of letting it marinate inside of me."

The Director

Kaiti Yoo '22

Main accounts: @KaitiYoo on Instagram and YouTube and @ktustudios on TikTok

Yoo started a popular YouTube channel during the Covid-19 pandemic but went on a six-month hiatus after moving to New York after graduation. She has since expanded into filmmaking, and her self-written/directed digital shorts series, *Two Good People*—which follows the social and emotional aftermath of a breakup between two young New Yorkers—recently debuted on her various social media channels.

“Ever since I was a child, I would tell my dad, ‘I wanna be famous,’ and he’d sit me down and tell me, ‘You need to contribute something to the world to be famous, okay?’ So when I started YouTube, I was kind of focused on becoming visible. It was not motivated from the best place at first. But I think a lot of adulthood is going back to what you did for fun as a child, and in my free time I was always filming my friends, editing movie trailers,

taking pictures. My subconscious was very drawn to content creation because I already enjoyed this visual fabric of telling stories, conflated with the idea that maybe this was a way to ‘make it.’

“It felt normal to be very vulnerable in my vlogs because, coming out of Covid, people were flocking to the internet for connection. But then I moved to New York City and I entered a pretty rough time of my life, both professionally and personally. It got to a point where my mental health was so low that I had to take six months off from working. I realized that I’d been placing my identity in the amount of people that I could get to connect to me and validate me, and I feel like vulnerability was almost this tool that I leaned on to get some sense of worth.

“When I graduated, I planned on being an influencer for as long as possible, but in the past year, because of the opportunities and skills that YouTube has given me, I’ve been able to refine what I want to do. I’m pivoting much more into filmmaking and directing, which still entails vulnerability and storytelling, but in a different way. Going on this wild creative ride of YouTube showed me you can bet on yourself and you can take risks.”



The Edutainer

Sarah Frank '25

*Main accounts: @simplestudiesinc
and @frankadvice on TikTok*

Frank initially posted on TikTok to promote Simple Studies, a nonprofit she started while attending a Title I public high school in Tampa, Florida, to combat educational inequity by providing free student resources such as study guides and college application tips. She also operates another TikTok account where she gives college advice and documents her life at Brown through a comedic lens.

"I attended a lot of admission sessions, a lot of office hours with admissions officers, a lot of webinars at all the schools that I was applying to. I feel like I had amassed so much information, and what was the harm in disseminating it? And once I got into Brown and the other schools that I had applied to, I think I gained credibility, so it sort of took off from there. I never intended to be an 'influencer.'

"My content is very college application and college life specific, so a lot of my audience is at Brown. The first month of school is my favorite time of year because people will recognize me from my videos, and it is the sweetest, most heartwarming thing when they come up to me and say that they

recognize me from TikTok, or that they even discovered Brown through me.

"One thing I've had to learn the hard way is separating constructive criticism from hate comments. If you're putting yourself out on the internet, you are in some way allowing people to comment on you. And that doesn't excuse people being mean, but it does mean that to some extent, you have to be ready for it."



The Eccentric

Yomi Adegbile '26

Main accounts: @its_yomi on Instagram and @ItsYomi on YouTube

Adegbile is a Brown|RISD dual degree student concentrating in sociocultural anthropology and illustration. He started posting speed-drawing videos on YouTube in eighth grade and has since produced various vlogs about his time on Brown's campus and abroad. He approaches his most popular platform, Instagram, quite differently, producing playful short-form videos in which he sings while showing off his paintings.

"I enjoy making content, but eventually I want this to be a side income. Social media is the entrance to a lot of different areas and fields and gives you a lot of opportunities. For example, through social media, I got a commission this past year from a Brown alum, so I think it can be really beneficial for my art. And I have this silly plan in the back of my head that I'll be this actor-singer. Obviously, that's like everyone's dream, but I've watched a lot of content creators who I follow suddenly start acting in shows.

"It's important to have a good digital footprint and to inspire people. You never know, when you put something out there, how it's going to be interpreted. There have been

videos that I've put out where I wouldn't agree with what I said or did in that video anymore, so I take them down. With social media, if someone talks, you're inclined to listen to them and take them as an authority figure, so with that comes responsibility."





The Professional

Lauren Eusebio '25

Main accounts: @candacevfx on TikTok, @emowhofromwhoville and @lolabugxd on Instagram, @emowhofromwhoville on YouTube

Eusebio has accrued millions of followers with her fan edits—a style of short-form video that applies music and video effects to spliced clips of pop-culture phenomena. While she first became popular on Instagram for posting fan edits of the TV show *Riverdale*, she built a much larger following on YouTube and TikTok for her video editing tutorials and a popular video series in which she creates anonymous TikTok accounts dedicated to fan edits of a trending celebrity or topic and documents how these accounts grow across a week.

“I spent my first two years at Brown doing pre-med neuroscience, but it was so much work that I would go months without posting on YouTube. I’m lucky my channel survived. It was honestly a bad time in my life because I was figuring out what I wanted to do for work, and in trying to work toward those goals, I felt like a failure in this other thing that I had made into my whole brand.

“I ended up realizing by my sophomore year that I actually didn’t want to go to med school. Once I pivoted to behavioral decision sciences, I felt like my classes were more enjoyable. I had more free time to do what I wanted to do and going into my junior year, I took YouTube a lot more seriously. That’s when I got my management, and after getting a manager, I don’t have the luxury of not having a schedule. Since August 2023, there hasn’t been a single month where I haven’t done at least one video with a brand deal. That structure has made me so much less stressed because I don’t need to know exactly what I’m doing post-grad, but I do know I have something planned.

“Every other creator I’ve spoken to says the same thing: When we try the hardest to appeal to people, it always falls flat. If you want to stand out and create your own niche, you have to do the exact opposite of following all the trends. It’s always those moments of just being creative, having fun, doing stuff that resonates with you that always ends up being the most successful.”

Ethan Pan '22 is a Brooklyn-based food writer and the digital marketing coordinator at the James Beard Foundation. His writing has appeared in publications such as Outside, Philadelphia magazine, and 5280.





The Gender

Some see “gender fluidity” as the latest wrongheaded trend in youth culture. Others argue the gender binary was a flawed system from the start. In a time when gender identity and expression are more fiercely politicized than ever, Gen Z is forcing a reckoning over traditional ideas of male and female—and whether they’re as simple as they seem.

Illustrations by Melinda Beck

What

happens if someone is a man but they turn into a woman? the middle school girl asked health educator Connie Collins '23.5. Collins won a research grant for her thesis in gender studies and three of her closest friends transitioned at Brown: two identify as trans, one as nonbinary. But for Collins, there was no crash course in gender quite like her current job: teaching sex ed to middle schoolers in Brooklyn, N.Y.

The program she works with has a narrow focus, so when students ask questions, she's on her own. To answer the girl's question about trans women, Collins used the term "assigned male at birth," for starters. And "I try to explain to them it's not 'turning into,'" Collins says.

Both Collins and her students are members of Gen Z, a generation that has brought the topic of gender identity into the mainstream and, with it, a "shaking off," as a 2023 BBC article put it, of the neat gender binary that categorizes all human beings as woman or man, she or he. While some transition—culturally, medically, surgically—from one side of the binary to the other, many more occupy a space outside it, arguing that the two categories come with a litany of social expectations about how women and men are supposed to talk, dress, and behave—expectations that don't at all match how they want to live in the world.

"I like femininity a lot. I love makeup. I love dresses. I prefer to wear skirts over pants," says Jules Griswold '25, "but I always also had masculine interests." Griswold started identifying as nonbinary—neither man nor woman—four years ago. They realized "there is a way to find a gender expression that works for you outside of the strict expectations that society puts out in terms of being masculine or feminine."

Griswold is not alone. There has been a thousandfold increase in Americans who identify as trans or nonbinary, from

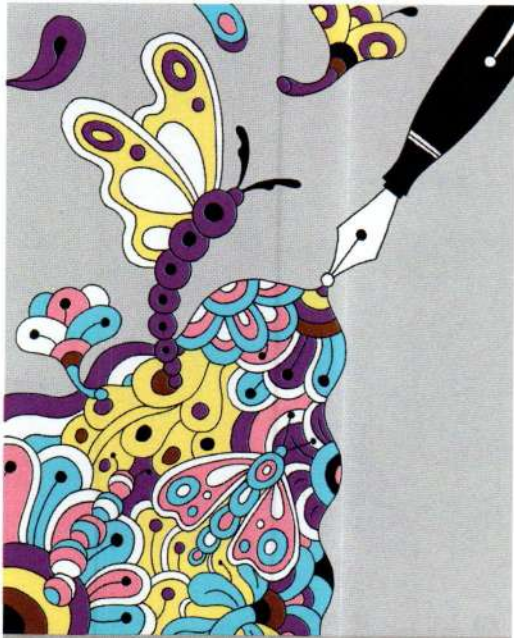
Boomers to Gen Z. About 5 percent of American adults under 30 identify as trans or nonbinary, according to a 2022 Pew Research Center study—compared to 0.3 percent of those 50 and older. Half of the under-30 group said they know someone trans or nonbinary and half of Gen-Zers believe the gender binary is outdated. Brown reflects this generational shift—in a spring 2023 *Brown Daily Herald* poll of more than 1,000 first-year students, 3.1 percent identified as "nonbinary" and an additional 1.8 percent as "genderqueer."

The American public isn't sold: Last June, 51 percent of those surveyed told Gallup they think it's morally wrong to change your gender—though they didn't want to legislate against it, with six in ten saying that they opposed banning gender-affirming care for minors. Meanwhile, a 2023 survey by the Public Religion Research Institute found that about two-thirds of Americans (65%) believe there are only two genders, with half feeling "strongly" about that.

Those numbers change dramatically when you look at subgroups, however, with a majority of college-educated people and an overwhelming majority of liberals saying they're supportive of trans people and of the concept of gender fluidity—especially if they know someone trans or nonbinary. In the academic and medical worlds and in Brown's administrative policies, acceptance of gender diversity is the norm. And that's even more true of the generation highlighted in this issue of the BAM.

"Kids are no longer just about pink and blue, and they're telling us the world is a much more colorful rainbow," said gender specialist Michelle Forcier, professor of pediatrics and assistant dean of medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School, in a 2023 Brown lecture series on "Trans Youth Now."

What are the reasons behind this shift?



Glossary

transgender people whose gender identity or expression differs from the norm—this can include those who medically transition and those who don't

cisgender people whose gender corresponds with their sex—for example, females who identify as women

nonbinary having a gender identity that does not conform to traditional European beliefs that there are only two genders, male and female

assigned gender how someone was labeled at birth based on their outward physical characteristics

affirmed gender the idea that medical intervention is an affirmation of a person's true, innate gender identity, rather than a transition

intersex a term that comprises more than 40 differences in sexual development caused by chromosomes or other biological factors

gender dysphoria psychological distress a person may feel when their assigned gender is at odds with their gender identity

WHY GEN Z?

What's changed, says Professor Denise Davis, director of Brown's graduate certificate program in gender and sexuality studies, isn't the number of people who don't fit the binary, but the visibility of people who have existed in our society all along. Decades before Caitlyn Jenner, America's first transgender star was World War II GI turned actress Christine Jorgensen, who transitioned in 1950. And in a 2019 talk on her book *Transgender History: the Roots of Today's Revolution*, historian Susan Stryker notes that trans history in America dates back to well before our nation's founding. In 1537, she says, Spanish explorer Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca wrote about Indigenous Americans who were "men," as he put it, but "they go about covered up like women and do the work of women."

Still, why the exponential increase in visibility as Gen Z comes of age? Stryker cites the work of two Brown alums as having had a major impact: the mid-'90s play *Hidden: A Gender* and book *Gender Outlaw* by Kate Bornstein '69 and the 1999 film about a trans man *Boys Don't Cry*, produced by Christine Vachon '83, for which Hilary Swank won a best-actress Oscar.

More broadly, Stryker points to changes in the early '90s that set the stage for more trans and nonbinary visibility: the necessary inclusion of trans people in HIV education; the rise of trans activist groups; the internet allowing marginalized people to connect and organize. By 2014, the cover of *Time* magazine asked, "Is this the Transgender Tipping Point?"

Now Gen Z, powered by social media, has mainstreamed the term *nonbinary*, appealing to young people who may not have classic gender dysphoria but like the idea of an exit from rigid ideas of what *male* and *female* signify.

In apparent reaction to this cultural shift, President Donald Trump dictated by executive order in January that the federal government recognize only two sexes—which many Brown students decried in part because it ignores the thousands of Americans who are biologically intersex (more than 60,000, using the most conservative estimate of 0.018 percent).

The order has already had serious implications. At press time, the freedom to travel was curtailed for some trans citizens as their passport applications or renewals were put on hold;

"The sex/gender divide is a way people thought up to try and think about the world, but the world is actually much more complicated than that."

trans service members were being purged from the military; and some hospitals and health plans abruptly ended gender-affirming medical treatment. At the state level, Iowa had removed trans civil rights protections. A trans PhD student who asked for anonymity for safety reasons says the U.S. "was already deeply hostile," but now it's "almost a principal

mode of governance to go after trans people. It's a particular kind of targeting I don't think we've seen the likes of before." Reading the orders, they say, "that's when I start going into deep, dark places. 'Cause you just can't understand it."

The bottom line is that Gen Z has played a key part in forcing a public reckoning, prompting many people to embrace the idea that gender is a bit more complicated than what we might have learned in school—and others to legislate that it isn't. To explore some of the issues and science behind these shifts, the BAM turned to Brown researchers and alumni who've had a national impact on thinking around gender—and to members of Gen Z itself.

NOT-SO-BASIC BIOLOGY

What is gender, exactly? The term itself has shifted. Prior to the mid-1900s, *gender* was a word used interchangeably with *sex*, if used at all. It wasn't until the 1940s and '50s that gender began to take on a meaning of its own, in response to uncertainty in the scientific community about what to call people whose biological traits do not clearly identify them as male or female (commonly called intersex people).

Psychologist and sexologist John Money, who coined the term *gender role*, believed intersex children could exist without a clear gender for roughly the first two years of life, at which point they had to enter either the male or female "developmental channel" to prevent social stigma. These "channels" include stereotypical gender distinctions, like that boys like sports and cars while girls like dresses and dolls.

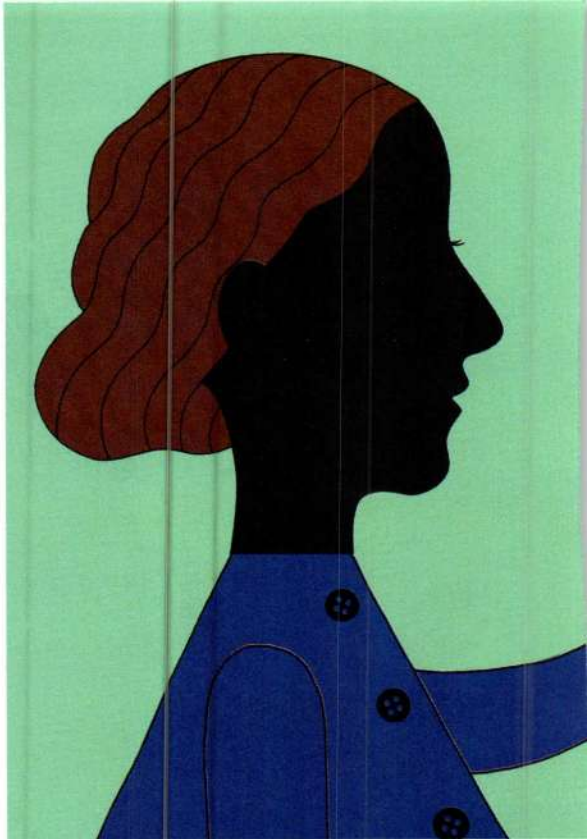
On a web page removed per executive order in January, the National Institutes of Health drew a distinction between gender and sex that corresponds with what many Gen-Z-ers were taught in middle school: sex is biological—anatomy, physiology, genetics, and hormones—while gender is socio-cultural, a collection of ideas about how different sexes ought to behave. The executive order posits sex as the only factor, describing gender identity as "extremist" ideology.

While the current administration aims to erase the idea of a divide between sex and gender by forbidding gender as an idea and word, the distinction has been challenged by medical researchers in recent years as not being expansive enough. One of the most prominent: Brown's Nancy Duke Lewis biology professor emerita Anne Fausto-Sterling '70 PhD.

When asked how people should frame the difference between sex and gender, Fausto-Sterling replies, "I'm going to make it even worse for you: I actually think that whole sex-gender divide is itself a construct."

"It's not real," she adds. "It's a way people thought up to try and think about the world, but the world is actually much more complicated than that."

Her work asserts that, based on biological science, "gender differences fall on a continuum, not into two separate buckets." She's referring to the many people who have differences in sex development, whether in hormone levels, chromosomes, genitals, or other factors. Researchers have



Are Kids Getting Sex Changes?

Despite alarming political rhetoric, the gender affirmation process for kids is "not sex-change surgeries in pediatric clinics," asserts Michelle Forcier, a professor of pediatrics and an assistant dean at the Warren Alpert Medical School. In a 2023 talk, part of a Brown lecture series titled *Trans Youth Now*, Forcier said there's a comprehensive process that always includes parents. For youth under 18, she added, medical treatment generally consists of puberty blockers, which are "very, very safe" and "put a pause" on changes, such as breast development or masculine bone growth, that can only be reversed surgically if allowed to continue. The purpose, she explained, is so kids can have time to figure things out and make careful decisions. "A child can take these medications and stop them without lifelong and future implications," she told *Healthline* in 2022.

While the use of puberty blockers has been on the rise, recent data suggest sex-change surgery for underaged patients—like removing breasts or altering genitals—is a phenomenon found only in political discourse, not medical practice. A 2024 Harvard study found "little to no" gender-affirming surgeries are performed on underage youth other than reduction surgeries on boys with gyne-



comastia, or larger than normal breasts.

As for puberty blockers, Forcier notes that “study after study, over years, continues to demonstrate that benefits outweigh risks,” cutting rates of suicide, depression, and anxiety. The data is so compelling that it has prompted every major medical organization to support this care, including the American Academy of Pediatrics—yet it remains a hot button political issue, with the Supreme Court now weighing whether to uphold a state ban of such treatment for minors.

Meanwhile, some in healthcare do have concerns about how gender-affirming care decisions are handled. Last fall, a leader in transgender healthcare at Boston Children’s Hospital who helped shape the field called the hospital’s new screening process for medical transition “reckless” after it halved its in-person assessments from four hours to two. The decision has divided providers and parents, with one psychologist denouncing the truncated process as “crazy,” while others argue it’s necessary as demand for treatment has climbed.

Plastic surgeon Alexes Hazen ’87, ’96 MD, who has performed gender-affirming surgeries at NYU’s Langone Medical Center, acknowledges “there are legitimate concerns in terms of the process of transitioning, what that should look like, and I have approached my care of patients with a lot of trepidation and a lot of caution.” She adds that with patients of any age, “If there’s any question about the degree to which the patient isn’t sure about their decision, then nothing happens.”

challenged Fausto-Sterling’s assertions about which chromosomal conditions qualify someone as intersex. Fausto-Sterling includes, for example, “males” who have an extra X chromosome and can develop breasts and have less body hair and smaller testicles. By her broader categorization, the percentage of intersex people in the population rises from 0.018 to 1.7 percent—more than five million Americans.

For years now, Fausto-Sterling has used the compound term gender/sex, “gender-slash-sex, one word, because there really is no way to make a clear binary.” She says the marginalization and villainization of those who don’t fit the gender/sex binary is the result of people carelessly throwing around both terms without stating plainly what they mean. She urges people—from researchers to politicians to parents—to “get specific” about “whatever it is you’re fretting about.”

“Really drill down,” Fausto-Sterling insists. “If they say, ‘Well, I don’t want a man in my bathroom,’ is it that they don’t want somebody with a penis in their bathroom? They don’t want someone with a Y chromosome? They don’t want someone who’s been trained to be aggressive to other people? What exactly is it that’s bothering them? Because those things aren’t necessarily linked and they aren’t the same thing.”

With more research, “the boundaries separating masculine and feminine seem harder than ever to define,” she says. “While the legal system may have an interest in maintaining only two sexes, our collective biologies do not.”

A PROLIFERATION OF BOXES

In academia and among Gen Z, debate persists on what it means for our culture, and for the majority who are not intersex, to abandon a binary sense of gender for something outside the man/woman dichotomy. Some see it as freeing us all from oppressive categories. Others see it as creating more boxes.

When they came out to their parents as nonbinary, Griswold—who first encountered the word on TikTok—delivered a PowerPoint presentation to explain terms they suspected their parents had never heard before. In it, Griswold described *nonbinary* as an “umbrella” term for the many ways

“I don’t believe gender identity or as I think of it more accurately, gender stereotypes, is a valid or helpful way to think about human beings.”

someone can feel uncomfortable with being perceived as 100 percent feminine or masculine. “We don’t fit completely as women or men,” they explained. But they stressed that gender is deeply personal, more complex than even the many labels that try to define gender nonconformity.

Some academics see the proliferation of labels as part of an overall increase in categorization of identity in our culture, driven by things like market segmentation and the social-

media algorithms that slice and dice us into smaller and smaller groups. Likewise, “gender identities are replicating, not dissolving,” says Columbia University sociologist Tey Meadows, author of *Trans Kids*, who recently spoke at Brown. “They are deeply held and increasingly institutionally embedded.”

For Gen-X-er Brian Eugenio Herrera '90, a professor at Princeton, the traditional labels never felt right. Herrera now goes with “he/him+”—he’s OK with a respectful “she” or “they,” he says. For him, nonbinary is “an alternate pathway that is now socially acceptable—a generic designation like M or F that I can opt for instead,” designed “for folks who feel that the social meanings of gender are not suited to them.”

“I spent half a century figuring out how to do the male thing,” Herrera says, “but I was constantly reminded that I was not doing ‘boy’ correctly.”

Yet some on the political left don’t believe that additional labels constitute progress. Former *New York Times* opinion columnist Pamela Paul '93 argues society takes a dangerous step backward by telling people who don’t conform to gender stereotypes that they don’t “belong” as males or females.

While she makes an exception for intersex people, Paul believes in sticking to the binary—people should live as males or females, but on their terms, she says. “I don’t believe gender identity or as I think of it more accurately, gender stereotypes, is a valid or helpful way to think about human beings,” Paul says. “It is destructive and cruel to say to a boy who is feminine that he’s not a real boy, or that a gay man is not a real man, and to use those kinds of gender stereotypes to negate someone’s sex and comfort in their own body.”

A self-described liberal who has received death threats for what some perceive as anti-trans views and whose work has been used to support right-wing legislation, Paul reserves equal amounts of criticism for those who bully femboys (or tomboys) and those who might encourage a so-called feminine boy or masculine girl to claim the nonbinary label.

“It’s undeniable there are many people in the world who’d like to limit what girls and boys can be. That used to come largely from cultural conservatives who believe that girls should be a certain way and boys should behave a certain way,” she says. “What’s interesting now—and distressing—is that there are some gender theorists and transgender activists who have asserted this idea that if you are gender non-conforming, that means that you are not actually a boy or a girl, but that you have a separate gender identity from your body. I think that’s a very dangerous and unfortunate and regressive way to characterize people. Kids, especially, should be made to feel comfortable in their bodies and entirely free to express themselves in any way.”

Paul takes no issue with biological men using women’s bathrooms or using she/her pronouns or seeking gender reassignment surgery to address persistent gender dysmorphia, but maintains that no action or behavior can or should negate that person’s lived experience as a biological male. Everyone should “be allowed to exist and behave and dress and

look and pursue a life that is as gender non-conforming as they like,” without fearing attack on their biological identity.

Others suggest we should find something else to hyperfocus on. Helis Sikk, a gender and sexuality studies professor at Brown, calls gender “an overdetermined concept” with far too much societal importance placed on gender norms and stereotypes, from gender reveal parties to outrage over pronouns.

Morgan Anderson '27, who took a class with Sikk, adds that people can choose to identify as nonbinary for a range of reasons, from wanting to make a sociopolitical statement to seeking a way to relieve dysmorphia, or extreme discomfort around not fitting into the gender assigned to them at birth.

FREE TO BE YOU AND ME?

Regardless of the cultural, political, or academic debate, the proliferation of labels, or the pushback against them, history tells us there have always been people who feel a sense of dissonance between their body and the expectations placed on it by society. Before the existence of chat rooms and online networks, people outside the mainstream struggled to find community—be they people questioning their gender or gender expression, bookbinding enthusiasts, or competitive Rubik’s Cubers. Thanks to technology, they’re no longer alone.

Griswold, who grew up in small-town Pennsylvania, was first introduced to the possibility of identifying as something other than man or woman by friends in high school, but didn’t learn the word *nonbinary* until the pandemic.

“I come from a super loving family and community...but it’s not exactly the place for a young kid to sort out their gender and sexuality questions,” Griswold says. “I didn’t realize there could be an in-between, a rejection of gender, or experimentation on the spectrum between men and women—or outside of that—until I learned more on social media.”

Anderson, who identifies as a woman but who has trans and nonbinary friends, remembers seeing a transgender girl for the first time when she was 8 or 9 years old, when her mom came across a video online. “My mom didn’t understand much about it beyond the average person in south, conservative Georgia... but my mom saw the video and was like, let me show it to my little girl who’s about the same age,” Anderson remembers. “And then when I was 10, 11, 12 years old, through social media and Wikipedia, I was given a lot of freedom to research, and I wanted to find and know everything I knew my community was not necessarily going to give me.”

But can such idea-sharing have a downside? Brown found itself in the thick of the political debate in 2018 when Lisa Littman, then an assistant professor at the School of Public Health, coined the term “rapid onset gender dysphoria” to describe teenagers or young adults who did not express signs of gender dysphoria prior to puberty but seemed to be responding to “social contagion,” or peer influence. (A 2022 study published in the journal *Pediatrics* came to the opposite conclusion, finding no evidence of “social contagion.”)

While Littman’s initial work, published in the journal



Multiple Choice

Some cultures around the globe recognize more than two genders

Some Indigenous American tribes have historically welcomed alternatives to the binary. One traditional name for this is *two-spirit*. Current American Studies PhD student Sherenté Harris '23, '24 AM, a member of Rhode Island's Narragansett tribe who identifies as two-spirit, told the LGBTQ organization GLAAD that "the role of two-spirit people is to remind our community that the things we think are so different—masculinity and femininity, or male and female—they overlap in all of us."

Elsewhere, the Indigenous town of Juchitán in Mexico's Oaxaca recognizes three genders: the third, *muxe*, is usually reserved for men who eschew traditional ideas of masculinity. In parts of South Asia, a similar "third gender" is called *hijra*. In Cambodia, where there is no mechanism to legally change one's gender, the national language still recognizes a third gender with the word *kteuy*, which can apply to any person with the physical characteristics of one gender but the social behaviors of another.

PLOS ONE, led to public outcry after it was labeled anti-trans, her research withstood additional peer review.

Littman has repeatedly clarified amid the politicization of her work that "the conversation we should be having around these issues is: some people are helped by [medical] transition, some people are harmed, and we need more research to better understand how to maximize benefit and minimize harm."

A survey of 90,000 trans Americans—the largest ever done—released in January offered a window into the prevalence of such harm. Three percent of respondents said they were a little (2%) or a lot (1%) less satisfied with life post-transition. The overwhelming majority—94 percent—said they were a little (15%) or a lot (79%) more satisfied with their lives.

In the end, for Anderson, Griswold, and others in Gen Z, what January's executive order terms extremist "gender ideology" is about all-American personal freedom. The range of ways people, especially teenagers and young adults, choose to express their gender varies widely and the individual choices remain deeply personal. For some, it takes a full suite of medical and lifestyle changes to feel comfortable inside their bodies. Others' preferred way of expressing gender is more fluid; they shift attire and behavior in response to what feels natural in that moment or season of life. Many are simply tired of the rigidity they perceive as inherent to the gender binary: the implication that being a boy or girl, a man or woman, means something beyond all they already are as a human being.

"One of the things I often wish I had was a magic scalpel that could perform a cultural-script-ectomy," muses sexual medicine specialist Pebble Kranz '91, '07 MD. "There is so much damage done to peoples' ability to experience a sense of pleasure and well-being in their perfectly healthy bodies when there is a discrepancy between what the culture tells us is 'normal'—what I call a 'cultural script'—and a human's

"Once people find something that makes them feel at home in their bodies, whether it's pants or gender-affirming therapy, why would we take that from them?"

physiologic reality." She believes while medical gender-affirming therapy isn't the right approach for everyone, it is ultimately a deeply personal choice, one that—with support—only the individual can make for themselves.

"People, once they find something that makes them feel at home in their bodies, whether it's pants or gender-affirming therapy, why would we take that from them?" she asks. "In the world of sexual medicine, we don't yuck people's yum. So if it is delicious for somebody, feels right for them, then we have an inalienable right to pursue happiness in this country. Don't we?"

Reporting by Tim Murphy '91, Ivy Scott '21.5, and Louise Sloan '88.

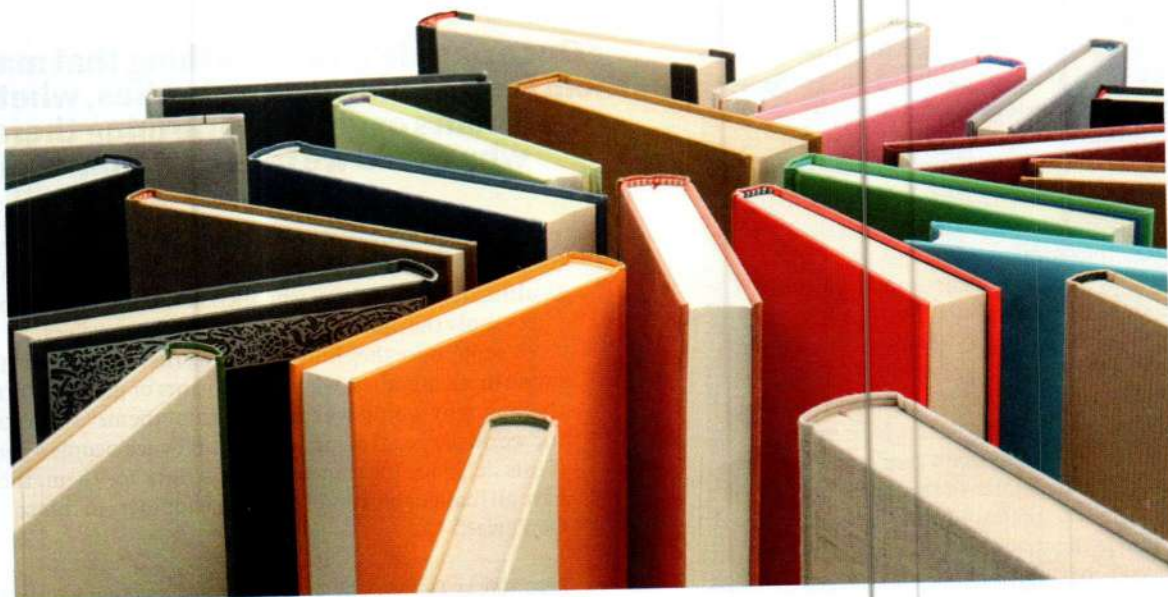
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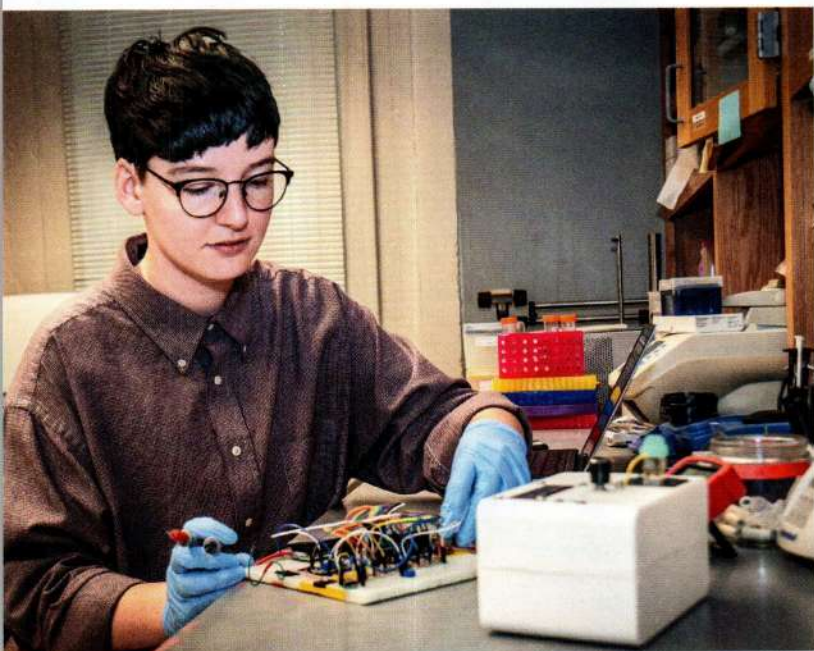
INNOVATION

Science Fair Dropout

Bioengineer Cel Welch creates devices that streamline cancer detection.

For a New Jersey science fair, Cel Welch '22 ScM, '24 PhD—then age 12—designed a pair of dirt-resistant socks to keep the family dog from tracking mud into the house. The judges deemed the submission “not science” and booted them from the competition. Undeterred, Welch spent the next 14 years designing ever-more-complex experimental devices. In 2023, they were named to *Forbes*’s 30 Under 30 list in science—their research wasn’t just “scientific,” it was some of the most groundbreaking innovation that the field of medical technology had recently seen.

Welch’s interest in science was always more practical than theoretical. As an undergrad at McGill, Welch would query their biology professors about the devices they used. “I would go up after class and say, can you tell me how this works, and they’d be like, we don’t make the machines, we don’t know,” Welch remembers. “I said, I want



to be the person who makes the machines.”

Welch’s desire to design machines led them to Brown to pursue a doctorate in bioengineering. By the time they completed their PhD, they had written 13 papers and filed 5 patents, mostly in the field of cancer detection.

In the lab of their mentor, professor Anubhav Tripathi, Welch created a new method for breaking down tissues using electrical fields. The process is remarkably effective at separating individual cells with minimal damage, so the cells can be used to biopsy cancer at high resolution.

With pathology professor Joyce Ou, Welch devised a method that uses machine learning to automate detection of cancer cells in pap smear slides.

Cancer fighter Welch works on electronic device prototypes.

“It typically takes two hours for a clinician to do this, so it really cuts down on the labor required,” says Welch. The technique also more accurately detects cervical cancer at a precancerous stage.

Despite their outstanding record as a young scientist, Welch didn’t always feel welcome in the academy because of their identity as a trans person. “People underrepresented in STEM often have to prove themselves several times over to convince others that they are deserving of their seat at the table,” Welch says. “I’ve often had the experience of coming into an environment that is not ready to receive me and meeting with a lot of resistance. There is an aspect of having to prove yourself before people will consider you credible.” While at Brown, Welch advocated for greater acceptance of LGBTQ+ scientists as president of oSTEM@Brown (Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and head of Queer Engineers International.

Welch dedicated what little free time they had during grad school to exploring hobbyist electronics kits. Now, they’re applying what they learned as a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford, working with chemical engineer Zhenan Bao to create flexible electronics that can be implanted into the body. “Traditional electrodes are very rigid,” Welch says, making it difficult to integrate them into tissues. In this case, the more flexible devices will be used to help better map and monitor the heart.

Welch says the “cool dual expertise” in biology and engineering they developed during their PhD enables them to make the machines that could lead to the next big breakthrough in medicine. “These devices are the basis of what a lot of fields are built on,” they say. “If you want to make a big change in medicine, one great way to do that is to redesign or invent a new tool.” —MICHAEL BLANDING

The flexible electrodes Welch is working on now might someday control the development of artificially grown tissues.

LANGUAGE

IN TRANSLATION Paige Aniyah Morris ’16 translates Korean literature into English, including Nobel Prize winner Han Kang’s novel *We Do Not Part*. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Morris said Kang’s work has “inspired a generation of Korean writers to be more truthful and more daring in their subject matter.” Morris, who graduated with a degree in ethnic studies and literary arts and later an MFA in creative writing from Rutgers, is based in South Korea. Her work has run in the *Georgia Review*, *Strange Horizons*, and *The Rumpus*, and while completing her Fulbright in Changwon, she worked



on the staff of *Infusion*, the literary magazine for Fulbright Korea. Whether she’s translating a children’s book or Kang’s intense prose, she resists the urge to overexplain. “There’s so much wonder and humility in reading something you don’t immediately ‘get’ because that means you have to sit with it and try,” she says in an interview with the *Georgia Review*. And when she encounters a compelling passage, she says she feels an urge to “translate it right away to share it with people in my life who may not otherwise have the chance to read and be struck by it, too.” —DANA RICHIE ’25

AI's Robin Hood

Aaron Gokaslan '18, '19 ScM, gives the secrets of AI to the people

When the world's leading artificial intelligence research group, OpenAI, released an early version of ChatGPT in 2019, the organization warned it was too dangerous to share the inner workings of its chatbot with the public. Aaron Gokaslan '18, '19 ScM disagreed.

To prove a point, he and classmate Vanya Cohen '18, '19 ScM, reverse-engineered the cutting-edge large language model—capable of writing Shakespearean plays or presidential speeches based on prompts from users—developed by the brightest minds in Silicon Valley.

opment, placing language modeling tools in the hands of researchers all over the world. The duo's publicly available dataset has over 4 million downloads.

While most tech giants are advancing their artificial intelligence research behind closed doors, Gokaslan believes in public access to the tools shaping the future of AI. In 2024, the open source internet nonprofit Mozilla recognized Gokaslan as one of the world's leading "architects of trustworthy AI" for his work creating and maintaining open source datasets and language learning

trained on a French government supercomputer. Designed to make AI research more accessible, BLOOM speaks more than 46 human languages, from Nepali to Swahili.

Wary of AI developers infringing on artist copyrights, Gokaslan prepared another dataset called Common Cans. This compiled 100 million Creative Commons photos, so anyone can craft their own AI-assisted images without stealing from licensed materials.

Gokaslan is mindful of the potential misuse of these tools and advises organizations like Encode Justice, which advocates for ethical AI policies. He also helped pioneer a widely employed license for responsible AI use that can be



Gokaslan in Dublin last summer, where he was one of 25 people Mozilla named as leading the next wave of the Internet.

Together, Gokaslan and Cohen drew on millions of web pages sourced from Reddit to largely replicate the mysterious datasets that made ChatGPT possible. They publicly shared their own underlying datasets, allowing anyone to develop and fine-tune a chatbot.

"A lot of the work wasn't appreciated at the time, particularly, four or five years ago, when I started working on it, and people just kind of saw it as a fun novelty," Gokaslan says. Now it has become a foundational part of AI devel-

models available for anyone to use.

"I want people to be able to build their own small version of these models, or be able to take an existing model and fine tune it to their needs," says Gokaslan, currently a doctoral student studying AI at Cornell. "How can you help not just accelerate your own research, but everyone's research?"

Gokaslan also played a leading role in spearheading BLOOM, an AI language model similar to ChatGPT, built by hundreds of international collaborators and

customized for different products. The basic template includes restrictions on wielding an AI model to do things like discriminate or give medical advice.

He's accomplished all this while finding time to help maintain a range of popular code libraries like pybind11 and Pytorch. Open source work may often be thankless but Gokaslan remains inspired by its far-reaching impact.

"Seeing people actually use the technology I built, every day, is extremely gratifying," he says. —JACK BROOK '19



ENVIRONMENT

Basic Training

Zanagee Artis '22 empowers the next generation of climate activists

Zanagee Artis '22 has to wonder if he's been cast in a very bad version of *Groundhog Day*.

He was still in high school when Donald Trump first won the presidency. A 2017 summer program led to conversations about politics and the environment and eventually the founding of Zero Hour, which organized a youth climate march in 25 cities around the world in July 2018.

"We were all too young to vote for the people who made the decisions that led us here," says Artis, who cofounded the group. "We have to fight for the future that we want to see." Zero Hour supports young people interested in climate activism by leading trainings and providing resources as entry points.

Artis admits that he carried a naïveté about the nature of political change during those early days. "We're gonna get all the young people on board. We're gonna march on Washington," Zanagee remembers thinking. "And they're all gonna change. That's how democracy works, and our

elected officials will listen."

"That's not at all what happens," he says now, seasoned by seven years of climate activism. He was encouraged by the Biden administration's efforts to end oil and gas extraction on public lands and waters, but ultimately the courts reversed these policies.

Oil and gas production has soared to record highs in the United States. Now, the movement faces a demoralizing second Trump administration.

"I would be lying if I thought that our chances at a livable future were not severely diminished by this election," says Artis.

Currently on hiatus from Zero Hour, Artis is still in the climate fight. A policy advocate at the Natural Resources Defense Council, he campaigns to end oil and gas exploitation, offshore drilling, and Arctic encroachment. While he put off law school to keep organizing, he's now contemplating a "break" to add that arrow to his quiver.

"I think a lot of organizers don't know what's next, but we are commit-

ting to continue to do climate work and to do advocacy," he says. "There's still a lot to fight for, and we'll get what we can get."

The vast majority of people view climate change as a problem, just not a problem that impacts them personally. "They don't perceive the risk of climate change as something that will impact them economically or financially, or force them to relocate or move," he says.

"There is no place on earth that will be isolated from the impacts," he says—a reality savagely delivered by Hurricane Helene and the rampant wildfires in Los Angeles County. "The United States is the biggest producer of crude oil and gas in the world, and also has a population that is complacent on climate change. So that's our task, to get those people involved and actually make sure that the U.S. is the leader in the world on climate solutions."

"We will inherit a planet devastated by climate change if action isn't taken to phase out fossil fuels," he says.

—ERIK NESS

Reforming Probation

A young alum takes aim at Rhode Island's prison pipeline

When Sam Trachtenberg '24 was in high school, one of his favorite rappers—Meek Mill—was sentenced to two to four years in prison for popping a wheelie on his dirt bike while on probation. Trachtenberg was dismayed, but he didn't think much more about it.

Three years later, he found himself finishing up a philosophy concentration, with punishment studies as a focus. He decided that if he was going to write a senior thesis in an esoteric intellectual field like philosophy, he'd also do something real, following his thesis's conclusion that "an egalitarian system of justice needs to minimize suffering as a result of punishment wherever possible." Trachtenberg had already spent two summers at the New York-based REFORM Alliance, a national organization dedicated to parole and probation reform.

Trachtenberg knew that Rhode Island's probation system was gratuitously harsh, "one of the worst probation systems in the country." He says one in six Black men in the state is currently on probation. He decided to work with House representatives Leonela Felix and Bob Craven to write a bill that would reform the system.

Probation is often dispensed in lieu of a prison sentence. But Rhode Island has long used probation as a gateway to incarceration. "There are about 40,000 things you can do on probation that aren't crimes but will get you sent to prison," Trachtenberg says—like failing to report a change of address or being late to a meeting with a probation agent. According to Yale Law School professor James Forman Jr. '88, existing probation systems give "virtually unbridled discretion" to parole officers.

Trachtenberg's bill will make Rhode Island's probation system less punitive. It focuses on limiting misdemeanor probation to one year and establishing a hearing procedure to handle "technical" probation violations. The bill found nearly universal support and at press time is expected to pass in the 2025 legislative session. "The reps I spoke with about the bill were super excited to hear about it," Trachtenberg says. "They're like, 'Oh my God, I've wanted to do that for years.'" —MEGAN TALIKOFF '25

With a bill under his belt, the California native plans to go to law school.



BOOKS

Fresh Ink

REVIEWED BY EDWARD HARDY

Blue Moon Looming by Javier Sandoval '17 (CutBank)

The ten long, sometimes feverish poems in this debut chapbook toggle between Mexico and the American West. It's a poetic landscape studded with cattle and campfires, chaos and comets, and the occasional talking dog. The poems are vibrant tales, meditations, and conversations—sometimes between lovers, sometimes between near strangers, sometimes with ancestors, and sometimes with ghosts. Sandoval teaches at the University of Alabama and edits poetry at *Black Warrior Review*. One of the poems, "Uncle Peyote," also appears in *The Best American Poetry 2025*.

Subjectified: Becoming a Sexual Subject by Suzannah Weiss '13 (Polity)

In this debut, Weiss explains that she learned early on that her body was not her own—that she was to be seen as an object and not a subject. In a book that is part cultural critique and part memoir, Weiss charts her ultimately sex-positive voyage from an early eating disorder and body perception issues to reporting on clothing-optional resorts, sex parties, and sex clubs, illuminating how

she gained agency along the way. The prose is candid, crisp, and playful, combined with an underlying call to action. Weiss writes: "When we are the creators—inviting others into our worlds, not just stepping into theirs—our whole lives shift." Weiss is a sex and relationship writer whose work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Glamour*, and *Men's Health*.

Bombay//New York Book: A Tangled Tale of Two Cities by Ria Mirchandani '15 & Shivantika Jain Kothari (bombaynewyorkbook.com)

With vignettes by Mirchandani and drawings by Kothari, readers vault through this brightly illustrated volume between two wildly different cities that are more alike than one might think. In New York, you might pick up a bagel, tough on the outside, chewy on the inside, with a cream cheese schmear. In Bombay (Mumbai), it would be *pav*, a shrunken Portuguese bread that is crispy on the outside, fluffy inside, and often filled with an omelet or minced meat. Mirchandani and Kothari grew up in Bombay, met in Providence—Kothari went to RISD—and lived a few subway stops from each other in NYC. But as Mirchandani writes, whichever city they're in, they often long for the other.

HEALTH

Better Birth

Med student Bintou Diarra's doula collective helps Providence mothers thrive

Bintou Diarra '23, '27 MD credits her passion for birth work to her West African heritage. In Mali and the Ivory Coast—the countries where her parents are from—birth attendants play a critical role in the labor process. This tradition, Diarra says, fosters a “framework of thriving rather than just surviving childbirth.”

In the U.S., this role is filled by a growing number of professionals called **doulas**. Like West African birth attendants, doulas are knowledgeable laypeople who support and advocate for the person giving birth, offering both the reassurance of an informed perspective on what's happening and a bag of tricks aimed at making labor and delivery easier.

Diarra is a second-year medical student, but she's been a doula since her undergraduate years at Brown. During a senior pre-med seminar, she bonded with fellow student Leona Hariharan '23 over their shared vision of a more supportive birth experience. They signed up for doula training with the organization Mama Glow, and in med school, Hariharan founded one of the first doula collec-

Bronx-born Diarra somehow found time as an undergrad to offer a hair-braiding service on campus, Bintou's Beauty, plus write about bioethics for the likes of the *Miami Herald*.

tives in the Ivy League. Diarra is now president.

Reproductive justice—the right to control your own sexuality and decisions about having children or not, and the right to a safe and healthy environment in which to raise them—is at the core of Diarra's approach to medical care. Her organization advances reproductive justice in the Brown community through educational and awareness events, by supporting doula training, and by connecting doulas at Brown to new mothers in Providence for postpartum support.

“Very often people think of birth work and medicine as these countervailing forces,” Diarra says. “But I think there are so many opportunities for physicians and birth and community health workers to work together. Medical knowledge is incredibly powerful, but physicians don't get to spend as much time with our patients.” The support and care doulas provide is not medical, but it is “longitudinal.”

And it is effective. Doula support has been shown to lower birth complications and significantly reduce cesarean sections and postpartum mood disorders. “Coupling this continuous support and non-medical interventions that enhance quality of life with the medical aspects of childbirth is not only entirely possible,” says Diarra, “but I think it is the way healthcare should be shaped.”

Diarra is considering primary care or obstetrics and gynecology and says that her doula training will “inevitably inform how I practice as a physician. I'm so open to—and appreciative of—different forms of knowledge and will think about the ways I can incorporate them into my practice.” She is also willing to listen to—and even invite in—other practitioners, “because we have a shared goal of ensuring that this patient thrives.” —KATE ROPE

The term *doula* is based on a Greek word meaning “women who serve.”



From Pageantry to Politics

Former Miss America Cara Mund '16 on running as a pro-choice Republican

"This is why I pray and ask God to close your womb so that you'll never be able to get pregnant and have children, unless you repent," read a threatening message Cara Mund '16 received in the midst of her 2024 campaign for North Dakota's lone seat in the House of Representatives.

Mund, a pro-choice Republican, is no stranger to threatening messages or uphill battles. She won Miss America—the first in North Dakota history—barely a year after graduating with her degree in business, entrepreneurship, and organizations and she challenged the local GOP establishment in 2022 and again in 2024, expressing the deeply held belief in abortion rights that she grounds in her support for limited government.

Though the Harvard Law graduate had previously thought about running for office, the 2022 Supreme Court decision in the Dobbs case—reversing nearly 50 years of women's reproductive rights under *Roe v. Wade*—made that idea an imperative, especially after the only clinic that performed elective abortions in North Dakota closed down. "I couldn't stand by and think for myself, let alone my future daughter, that these debates could go by without some of the facts of how this impacts people in North Dakota," Mund says.

A self-described moderate and lifelong Republican, Mund has been vocally anti-Trump. While decrying the southern border as a crisis, she supported the bipartisan border security and foreign aid package that was killed after Trump opposition, and she believes in a more accessible path to citizenship.

Her late start in the 2022 election meant she could run only as an independent and she garnered an impressive 37 percent against a GOP incumbent, leveraging Facebook and TikTok in addition to traditional campaigning.

In 2024, Mund ran for the state's House seat as an underdog Republican. Campaign finance records show that



Mund at a campaign stop last fall in North Dakota

Mund's campaign raised \$26,472, whereas the frontrunner, Julie Fedorchak, who received a Trump endorsement, raised nearly two million dollars. Ultimately, Mund finished third in the Republican primary.

Her campaign received pushback from North Dakotan Republicans and, in an email she sent to *USA Today* during her 2024 campaign, she claimed that prominent Republicans in the state were scared to support her candidacy for fear of political retribution.

But by listening to and amplifying the stories of North Dakotan women denied health care, Mund feels like she won just by running. Plus, the readers of the *Bismarck Tribune* voted her 2024's "Best ND Politician."

After the campaign, she joined the large law firm of Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, certain that new and bigger challenges lie ahead. "Coming out of Miss America, I didn't want to think I'd peaked," she says. "If you peak at 24, you're doing it wrong." —WILL BUNCH '81

FILM

BITTEN BY THE BUG Amy Teboul '23 found herself working as a bug-wrangler senior year. Her job: order a live beetle and get it to crawl up the half-naked body of a student actor in a gay erotic short, *Good Morning I Love You*, which she produced. "The director and I decided that using an animatronic beetle would look too camp," she says. The beetle-whispering was worth it: the short was awarded Best Indie LGBT Film 2023 by Best Film Awards. She loved the way



producing bridges the creative and pragmatic. "The director lays out a creative vision for a script," she says, "but making it all happen is the producer's responsibility." She reached out to producer Josh Sondock '18 through BrownConnect+ and ended up working on projects including a Harry Styles video. Teboul is now at Searchlight Pictures, where she's worked on the marketing launch of films including *A Real Pain*, *Nightbitch*, and *A Complete Unknown*. —TIMMURPHY '91



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APRIL–MAY 2025 THE CLASSES...57 CLASSIFIEDS...60 OBITUARIES...77

THE CLASSES



STARING AT PAPERS, NOT PHONES A tabletop radio for music and news, a small magazine rack by the radiator, a quill pen tucked into the corner for correspondence or notes, and a handmade doily framed as wall art. This mid-century dorm room feels worlds away, reminding us of a time when music and news came through static and writing still involved ink. The furniture is sturdy, classic New England: a wooden desk, a Windsor chair, and a patterned bedspread that looks as if they've seen everything from hurried mornings to lazy afternoons. But the scene itself is as familiar today as it was then. Three friends sit together, one in a chair with a book, the others cross-legged on the rug, huddled in conversation over course notes, a manuscript, or something of the sort. Not all that much has changed. We crowd into small rooms with radios. In most cases, the skirts and cardigans have been swapped for sweatpants and hoodies. And curtains are banned as fire hazards. Yet in the dorms, timeless rituals endure. Some things, thankfully, stay the same. —YUKTI AGARWAL '24.5

THE CLASSES

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75TH REUNION

50 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

51 Send your news to Class President **Gene Weinberg** at awew1@cox.net or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

52 Send your news to Class Secretary **Joe Munro** at munrojb@aol.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

53 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Marty Cohen (see **Peter Szura** '72).

54 Send your news to class secretaries **Margery Sharp** at 75 Harrington Ave., Shelburne, Vt. 05482; margexsharp@gmail.com; or **Marshall Cohen** at bigmarsh@verizon.net; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

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55 Send your news to Class Secretary **Lucy Brubaker Tortolani** at etortolani@cox.net or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

56 Send your news to **Gretchen Wheelwright** at ggwphd@aol.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

58 Send your news to Class Secretary **Jill Hirst Scobie** at 15 Albert St., Waltham, Mass. 02453; jill.scobie@alumni.brown.edu; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

59 Send your news to Class Secretary **Caryl-Ann Miller Nieforth** at 161 Everett Ave., Providence, R.I. 02906; carylanni89a@gmail.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

65TH REUNION

60 Send your news to Class Communications Chair **Jane Doane Anderson** at janeanderson1960@comcast.net.

61 Send your news to Class Secretary **Beth Burwell Griffiths** at nhbeth773@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Richard Morrill (see **Jesselyn Brown Radack** '92).

63 Send your news to Class Secretary **Barbara Smith Langworthy** at blangworthy63@gmail.com or directly to alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

David Ganes retired from UConn 22 years ago, but has been very busy since. He has published several books available at amazon.com/author/davidganes. He has also been involved in theater, book discussions, and literature programs in the greater Hartford (Conn.) area.

Charles Seagrave writes that he and his wife now reside on a small farm in Northern Wyoming with their "new neighbors"—a herd of 50 buffalo. So far, they seem to ignore him and his Aussiedoodle.

60TH REUNION

65 Send your news to Class Co-Vice President for Communications **Terri Alschuler Hale** at vanhale43@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

66 Send your news to Class Cosecretary **Jaclynne Horn Laxon** at jlaxon@comcast.net or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

67 Send your news to class copresidents **Sharon Drager** at sbdrager@sbcglobal.net, **Keith Mosher** at keithnote@sbcglobal.net, or class treasurer **Dave Chichester** at davidchichester1@gmail.com.

Pete Johnson writes: "I'm officially retired from the department of mathematics and statistics of Auburn University, but, due to a resignation and a death in our research group, I'm advising eight PhD candidates, and also teaching a course that I've been teaching for almost 30 years in hopes of luring one of our young rascals to teach it so that it won't disappear from our course offering. Eight PhD students is a lot, so I'm working almost as hard as I was before retirement. It's cutting into my drinking time! That may be a good thing."

Stuart Kleeman (see **Jennifer Kleeman Wall** '96).

68 Send your news to class cosecretaries **Kitty Walker Keane** at kittywalkerkeane@gmail.com or **Marty Mueller** at martymueller1@aol.com.

55TH REUNION

70 Send your news to Class Vice President of Communications **Geri Williams** at geri3williams@comcast.net or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

71 Send your news to class co-vice presidents for communications **Darrell Davidson** at dddavids@iupui.edu; **Harry L. Watson** at hwatson@email.unc.edu; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

72 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

John Jaworski writes: "I am retiring from my lifelong avocation of refereeing varsity high school sports (soccer, 25 years; basketball, 43). However, I will still be training new basketball officials and teaching basketball to pre-high school players. Athletics has been a genuine blessing throughout my life, including my three season participation (flag football, basketball, and softball) in Brown intramurals during my four year undergrad career. Many great memories of games in Marvel Gym with some wonderful friends! Go Gents!"

Peter Szura writes: "I finally returned to

"Eight PhD students is a lot, so I'm working almost as hard as I was before retirement. It's cutting into my drinking time!"

—Pete Johnson '67

Providence in May 2018. I was shocked how green the Green was. I want to agree with **Marty Cohen '53**—"trying to understand politics as they are, not what we studied."

73 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Mary Hutchings Reed '73 AM and her husband, **William Reed '74**, attended the Faulkner for All Festival in New Orleans in September, where **Thomas Mallon '73** was honored by The Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society with an ALIHOT (A Legend in His/Her Own Time) Gold Medal for his "multi-genre literary achievement." Tom gave a keynote address on political fiction and a second presentation on AI, plagiarism, and originality. Mary's unpublished novel, *Markers*, was recognized by the Society in its novel writing competition. Her seventh novel, *Harmony's Peace & Joy*, launched in September and was recommended by BookLife as "Great for fans of Ann Patchett's *The Dutch House* and Lauren Groff's *Arcadia*." It is available in paperback and on Kindle on Amazon: [a.co/d/zh2svSo](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09ZHS2VSO)

74 Send your news to class co-vice presidents for communications **Scott Harris** at sharris@alumni.brown.edu; or **Jim Morris** at jimmorris@alumni.brown.edu; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Steven Birnbaum (see **Jennifer Kleeman Wall '96**).

Mike Nichols (see **Andrea Horvath Link '89**).

Cy A. Stein writes: "I was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Oligonucleotide Therapeutics Society last year at a meeting in Barcelona. The Society celebrated 20 years in 2022. Oligonucleotides

are small bits of DNA or RNA that can be used as therapeutic agents. I received my award for a lifetime of study of phosphorothioate oligodeoxyribonucleotides. There are about half a dozen of these molecules that are FDA-approved and marketed for a variety of indications that otherwise have few or no treatments."

50TH REUNION

75 Send your news to Class Communications Chair **Rhonda Port Walker** at rpwalkerbhj@verizon.net or directly to alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Communications Chair **Rhonda Port Walker** reports: "Mark your calendar for May 23-25, 2025! Our 50th reunion is almost here. A 50th reunion is a huge milestone, and ours will be even more special after missing our 45th. Reunion information will be sent **ONLY** via email, so be sure to visit my.brown.edu to confirm that your contact information is accurate. If you have news to share or any questions about the 50th reunion, contact me at rpwalker@alumni.brown.edu or send your news directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu. Please consider joining our class site on BrownConnect+ at brownconnectplus.brown.edu and the nearly 300 classmates who are members of the Class of 1975 Facebook group (private group for just our class) at facebook.com/groups/103075568767/"

Howard Shire (see **Eric Lewin '12**).

Vassie Ware, professor of biological sciences at Lehigh University, is the recipient of the University's Inclusive Excellence Faculty Award. This award recognizes and honors a faculty member for outstanding contributions to research, administration, practice, advocacy, and/or policy, and whose work informs and advances the understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence at Lehigh University.

76 Send your news to Class Communications Chair **Kevin Rudden** at kevin.rudden@gmail.com or directly to alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Brad Dellenbaugh (see **Emily Dellenbaugh '12**).

77 Send your news to Class President **Kenneth Dill** at sixdills@hotmail.com; Class Co-Vice President **Lucin**

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IN THE NEWS

The American Society for Bone and Mineral Research conferred the William F. Neuman Award, its oldest and most prestigious honor, on **Andrew Arnold '74** for his scientific contributions in the area of bone and mineral research and for contributions to associates and trainees in teaching, research, and administration. He is a pioneer studying endocrine tumors and hyperparathyroidism. His work includes discovery of cyclin D1, the first known parathyroid oncogene and fundamental cell cycle regulator.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

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da Flowers at lucindaflowers910@gmail.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Barbara Sunderland Manouso writes that she has been invited to serve on the International Labour Employment Relations Association (ILERA) advisory board. She also serves as a LERA Houston chapter board member. She has been CEO of Manouso Mediation and Arbitration LLC: Solution-2Conflict since 1993, an international training program for mediators and arbitrators based in Houston and Portsmouth, R.I.

78 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Patsy Dimm** at patsydimm@msn.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Tom Finn writes: "This year, **Jeff Robbins** and I are writing together again, though slightly differently than while at Brown. In 1976, while I typed his paper due the next morning, **Jeff** and **Andy Chaikin** assisted in the background by having a cherry yogurt fight. Pre-word processors, the inevitable cherry plops on the typed pages were more disastrous than now; but Jeff promised to stay up all night re-typing the paper. He was last seen running across Wriston Quad, paper aloft, to deliver the paper to a professor's Pembroke office. Reaching greater heights in 2024, Jeff has published his book, *Notes From the Brink: A Collection of Columns about Policy at Home and Abroad*, about which former Massachusetts Governor William Weld said, 'You hardly know whether to laugh or cry and will likely wind up doing both.' I published my second book, *The Shift Effect: How Small Shifts Improve Leader Performance*, a book for leaders based on evidence from 50



From left: Stuart Kleeman '67, Jennifer Kleeman Wall '96, Alexandra Gordon Patel '96, Daniel M. Gilbane '98, Eleanor Heard Gilbane '98, Thomas Gilbane III '97, Kate Egan Gilbane '97, and Steven Birnbaum '74 (see pg. 67).

of my clients that small shifts in behavior or attitude can make big bottom-line impact, from implementing big systems to shoring up a cross-race relationship." Contact Tom at tom@tomfinnassociates.com.

David Shields (see **Elizabeth Searle** '88 AM).

79 Send your news to class communications cochairs **Charles Jackson** at jacksons9redsox@gmail.com;

or to **Fred Cooper** at fcooper@tollbrothers.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Russ Ellsworth '85 ScM writes: "On August 8, I summited Mt. Katahdin in Maine, completing a 20-year section hike of the Appalachian Trail. I hiked most of it (1,500 of 2,200 miles) in the past four years since retiring from a 40-plus-year career as a software engineer working mostly on sensor systems." Contact Russ at rdkce@comcast.net.

THE CLASSES

45TH REUNION

80 Send your news to class cosecretaries **Mary Minow** at maryslibr@gmail.com and **Gina Brelsford** at brelsford@alumni.brown.edu, or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

81 Send your news to Class Co-Vice President for Communications **Suzanne Curley** at suzo329@gmail.com; or Class Co-Vice President **Charles Taylor** at ctaylor@htgroup.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Sharon Eisenstat Shire (see **Eric Lewin** '12).

82 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Liza Boyajian** at lizaboyajian@gmail.com; Class Copresident **Roger Baumgarten** at rogerbaum@comcast.net; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Judy Kosan Cohen writes that her daughter, **Wendy Cohen** '19, had artwork on view at the Brooklyn Museum as part of the *Brooklyn Artists Exhibition*. Blending weaving techniques with found objects, Wendy creates playful and often precarious-looking forms that embody physical comfort and anxiety. *Gram's Door* recreates the front door of Cohen's grandmother's apartment, complete with the fixtures from the original door. In the same way that Cohen's crochet process becomes a record of her time and hand, these objects hold memories of her grandmother's touch.

83 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Armand Fasano writes: "My son and I had the privilege of attending a lecture by **Arn Chorn-Pond** '90, a remarkable individual. Mr. Chorn-Pond's work in Cambodia, particularly his efforts to revive music and culture after the devastating impact of the Khmer Rouge regime, is nothing short of extraordinary. The lecture we attended was a deeply moving experience. Mr. Chorn-Pond's personal stories of survival and his passion for his work were truly inspiring. He spoke eloquently about the importance of music and culture in healing and rebuilding communities. His message resonated deeply with both my son and me. While Mr. Chorn-Pond's work has been featured in Ted Talks and articles, including a notable piece in BAM ["Songs of Survival," Jan.-Mar. '22], nothing compares to the experience of hearing him speak in person. His presence, his passion, and his commitment to his cause are remarkable. Attending this lecture was a genuinely transformative experience. It reminded us of the power of music and culture to bring peo-

"Nothing compares to hearing him in person. His presence, his passion, and his commitment to his cause are truly remarkable."

—**Armand Fasano** '83

ple together, to heal wounds, and to inspire hope. Mr. Chorn-Pond's work is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the importance of preserving cultural heritage."

Steven Kowalski published *Creative Together: Sparking Innovation in the New World of Work*. The book is about rethinking what creativity is, who we are as creators, and how to create together with others in teams and organizations.

Ian Maxtone-Graham writes: "I wrote an afterword for one of my favorite novels, *Providence*, by Geoffrey Wolff, which was reissued in October 2024 by Godine Press. The book is set in the Providence of the early '80s, when the city was ruled by Buddy Cianci and Raymond Patriarca. I met Geoffrey when he

came to speak to a journalism class I was taking, and I subsequently read all of his books. Years later we became close friends, and being asked to write the afterword was both flattering and terrifying. I highly recommend the book to all, especially those who remember Providence as it was back then."

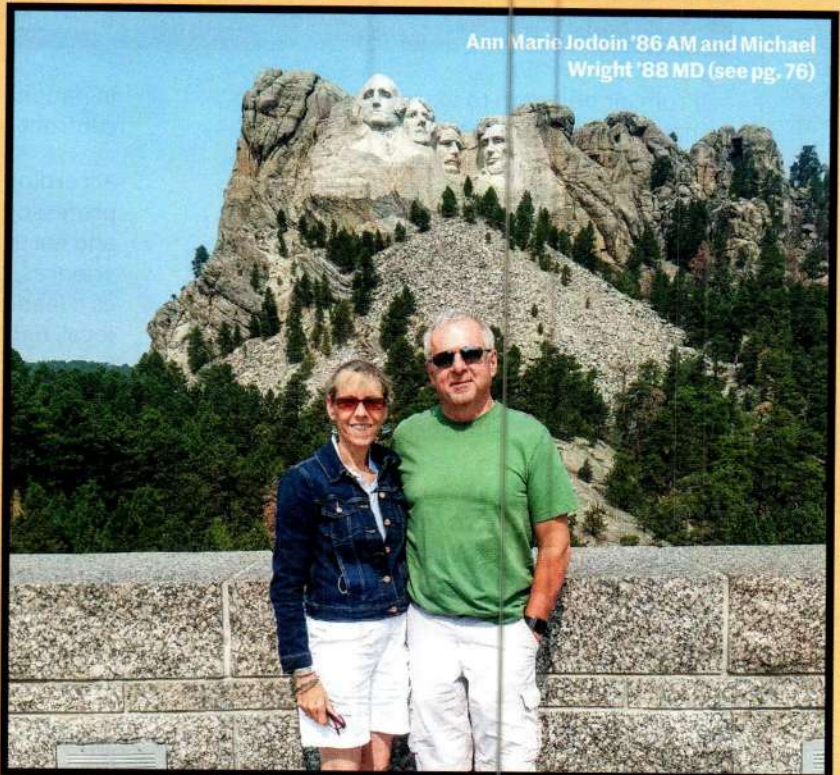
84 Send your news to Class Communications Chair **Joan Winter Skerritt** at joan_skerritt@alumni.brown.edu or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

40TH REUNION

85 Send your news to class communications cochairs **Ellen Taschioglou Parsons** at ellenparsons@gmail.com; or **Daniel Sterman** at daniel.sterman@gmail.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

86 Send your news to Class Communications Chair **Cecilia Francesca Pineda** at ceciliafpineda@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

87 Send your news to Class President **Pamela D. Gerrol** at classof1987@alumni.brown.edu or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.



Ann Marie Jodoin '86 AM and Michael Wright '88 MD (see pg. 76)



PROFESSOR HASTINGS AND STUDENTS CHECK AN AIR MONITORING SENSOR ATOP "THE ROCK" TO UNDERSTAND THE DRIVERS OF POLLUTION AND LINKS TO HEALTH OUTCOMES IN DISTINCT NEIGHBORHOODS.

Shaping Scalable Climate Solutions

By Elizabeth Kellner Suneby '80

The Institute at Brown for Environment and Society is working to redefine climate leadership through experiential learning, solutions-driven research and collaboration across and beyond the University.

From air pollution to extreme weather to habitat loss, the broad scope of climate and sustainability risks is becoming more and more apparent. Durable and scalable solutions to these critical challenges require a systems approach that draws upon expertise from scientific, political, economic, technological and social science fields.

This perspective has fueled the academic and research success of the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society (IBES) since its founding in 2014 as the University's hub for climate, sustainability and environmental scholarship. As IBES marks its 10-year anniversary, the institute is experiencing a boom in research initiatives that deliver real-world impact and is playing a growing role

in national and international partnerships to confront climate problems.

According to IBES Director Kim Cobb, a professor of environment and society and earth, environmental and planetary sciences, the institute has established itself as a leader in accelerating solutions at the local, national and global levels by engaging Brown experts across disciplines and nonacademic collaborators. These include government agencies, elected officials, private industry, nonprofit organizations and community members.

"Collaboration is in Brown's DNA. IBES is harnessing Brown's unique strengths and our student and faculty's passion for building

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a just, sustainable world," says Cobb. "To be the engine of effective solutions and a training ground for the next generation of changemakers, we are attracting funds for research and student training that broaden participation in our work across campus and beyond."

Driving collaborative research

IBES has experienced a 500% increase in sponsored research in the past five years. With a grant from the National Science Foundation, IBES launched a coastal resilience research hub, bringing together universities, organizations and stakeholders to address flooding and its societal impacts in New England's low-lying coastal communities.

IBES also launched Equitable Climate Futures — a three-year initiative to build Brown's capacity for climate solutions research, focused on historically marginalized communities — with the School of Public Health, School of Engineering, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs and Swearer Center for Public Service. And with a grant from the National Institute on Aging, researchers from IBES and Brown's School of Public Health will investigate ways to mitigate the health consequences of climate change on America's aging populations.

IBES faculty are also influential in policy initiatives. They lend expertise at all levels of government, and they regularly accompany students on trips to Washington, D.C. to share their research and classroom projects with policymakers and other influencers.

With joint appointments in nine academic departments, "IBES scholars don't fit into any box," says Scott Frickel, the institute's director of research. "We tackle questions that resist disciplinary answers, encouraging students to confront the complexity of environmental problems."

Preparing collaborative leaders

The number of environmental studies and sciences concentrators has more than doubled in the last five years, and non-concentrators account for most of the students in the institute's classes. In IBES's foundational Environmental Studies class, undergraduates work with community-based partners to

address local problems, such as water pollution. In a course centered on the Breathe Providence research project, students apply their technical, communications and community engagement skills to improve air quality standards and policies.

Dov Sax, a professor of environment and society, ecology, evolution and organismal biology, notes undergrads' key roles in faculty-led research, estimating that at one point, students were lead authors on more than one-third of the research papers from his lab.

The institute also attracts Ph.D. students and recipients of Brown's prestigious Voss Postdoctoral Fellowship. Voss postdoc Jada Ko, an anthropological archaeologist, studies biodiversity loss with a focus on freshwater turtles. She says she was "drawn to Brown because of the interdisciplinary environment at IBES."



WHAT BRINGS JADA KO (LEFT), A ZOOARCHAEOLOGIST AND VOSS POSTDOC, TO IBES? TURTLES! WHILE WORKING IN THE FIELD FOR HER DISSERTATION, KO "SAW THE POTENTIAL TO PARTICIPATE AS AN ARCHAEOLOGIST IN THE CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSE CONCERNING BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION."

Looking ahead, IBES is broadening its curriculum to welcome more students — including establishing a new program in sustainable finance and investing.

"We have big dreams for the impact Brown will have in delivering solutions to the climate crisis and equipping our students to lead in this space for decades to come," says Cobb. "We want nothing less than for Brown to redefine climate leadership in the 21st century in higher education."

THE CLASSES

Elizabeth Gordon Dellenbaugh (see **Emily Dellenbaugh '12**).

Pamela Gerrol writes: "In an effort to make the best of being unemployed, I spent nine days in California visiting friends and family last June. I had a lovely visit with my cousin **Seth Kertzer '98** and his family in the beautiful setting of the San Jose Rose Garden, which was in full bloom. I was treated to a home-cooked meal by my cousins in Berkeley, **Ari Johnson '04** and his wife **Jess Beckerman '06**. I have no idea how they had time to do this between their roles as parents and physicians and running their health organization Muso, in Mali, but it was a wonderful visit and a delicious meal. Later in the week a great group of classmates came together from all over the Bay area for a festive dinner in Noe Valley, which included **Eric Bloch** and his wife **Isabell**, **Cathy Cockrum Dean**, **Carl Haverl**, **Jim Kleinmann**, **Joy Shiragian**, **Mike Tempero**, and **Adrienne Wong**. Fun Fact: Nearly all attendees were meeting each other for the first time. There was also a fresco Mexican dining in Santa Clara with **Greg Corning**, and a bonus Italian dinner in San Francisco with **Felice Liang**. My nephew and I were hosted (and chauffeured) by **Donald** and **Jennifer Don Apy** for an unforgettable day in Napa with VIP treatment, complete with wonderful private wine tastings at two of their favorite wineries—St. Supéry and Davies—and a fun picnic at V. Sattui. Thank you again to everyone for your generosity and for making time to see me. The trip was the highlight of the year for me. On a separate note, I'd like to wish all of my classmates a happy 60th birthday."

88 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Vinny Egizi** at vinnymass@yahoo.com or directly to alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Juan F. "Pancho" Alemán writes: "I moved back to the U.S. after 12 years living and working in Tokyo, Singapore, and London as part of a 24-year career with Citibank. In August, I joined the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington, D.C. It would be wonderful to reconnect with classmates there or in the vicinity of Princeton, New Jersey, where my husband and I spend most weekends." Contact Juan at jfaleman25@gmail.com.

Ben Hall writes: "I'm in my eighth year as the senior content producer for Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School in Boston and still enjoying it. I got to travel with a student group to Rwanda in early 2024 to write about and photograph the journey for our alumni magazine. With both our boys now in college, Kelly and I are managing to do some traveling ourselves, including Peru, Portugal, France, Scotland, and an oddly rewarding six-

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hour walk down all of Broadway, from the northern tip of Manhattan to Battery Park." Contact Ben at bostonbkh@gmail.com.

89 Send your news to Class President **Michael Tate** at ivyleague-boy1989@yahoo.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Andrea Horvath Link, executive director of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Houston Galveston, was honored to give the Fellowship's Humanitarian of the Year award to fellow Brunonian **Mike Nichols** '74 for his work addressing homelessness in Houston. Andrea has been in the nonprofit sector since she left clinical practice in 2001.

35TH REUNION

90 Send your news to Class President **Jonathan Steinberg** at jonathan.steinberg.90@alumni.brown.edu; or Class Communications Chair **Courtney Wilson** at courtneywilson@yahoo.com.

Arn Chorn-Pond (see **Armand Fasano** '83).

Michael Delman writes: "As part of a focus on 'Boys Are Struggling' that relates to school success, college readiness, and executive function skills, I was featured

on *Good Morning America* along with a client of my company, Beyond BookSmart. We have launched two new divisions: BrainTracks.com, to train schoolteachers; and WorkSmartCoaching.com, to train corporate professionals and other adults (including college students) who are trying to be more productive and balanced."

91 Send your news to Class Communications Cochair **Gayle Weiswasser** at gweiswasser@gmail.com.

92 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Jeffrey Wolfson** at jawolfson@comcast.net.

Jesselyn Brown Radack writes: "Our sons (an architect and a data scientist) are happily adulting and our daughter is in her final year at the Naval Academy. Now that our

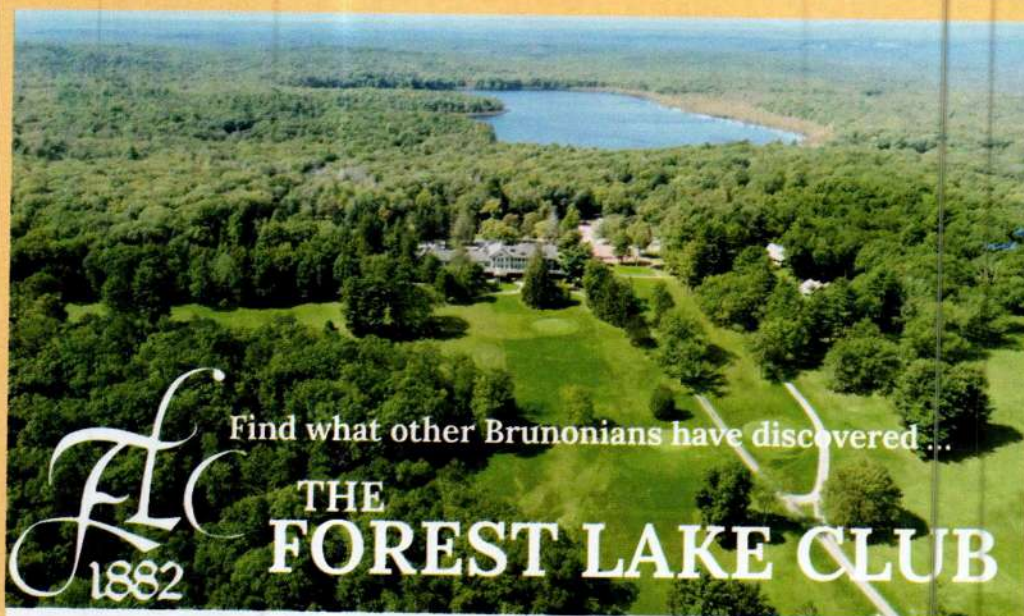
"I highly recommend the book to all, especially those who remember Providence as it was back then."

—**Ian Maxtone-Graham** '83

nest is empty, we moved to Paris! I've run into a number of Brunonians including **Richard Morrill** '61, **Charlie Undeland**, **MJ Batson** '13, and the parents of **Zara Massiah** '28. If you find yourself here, please reach out to jar3rad@gmail.com because I love catching up and hosting old friends."

IN THE NEWS

Jad Daley '90, president and CEO of American Forests, was named to the 2024 TIME100 Climate list as one of the top 100 innovative leaders driving climate action. He was recognized in the Defender category for his role in leading the strategic direction of American Forests to advance the organization's mission to create healthy and resilient forests that deliver essential benefits for climate, people, water, and wildlife. His long history of climate leadership includes founding key coalitions such as the Forest-Climate Working Group and U.S. Chapter of it.org, as well as authoring federal legislation to establish forest programs.

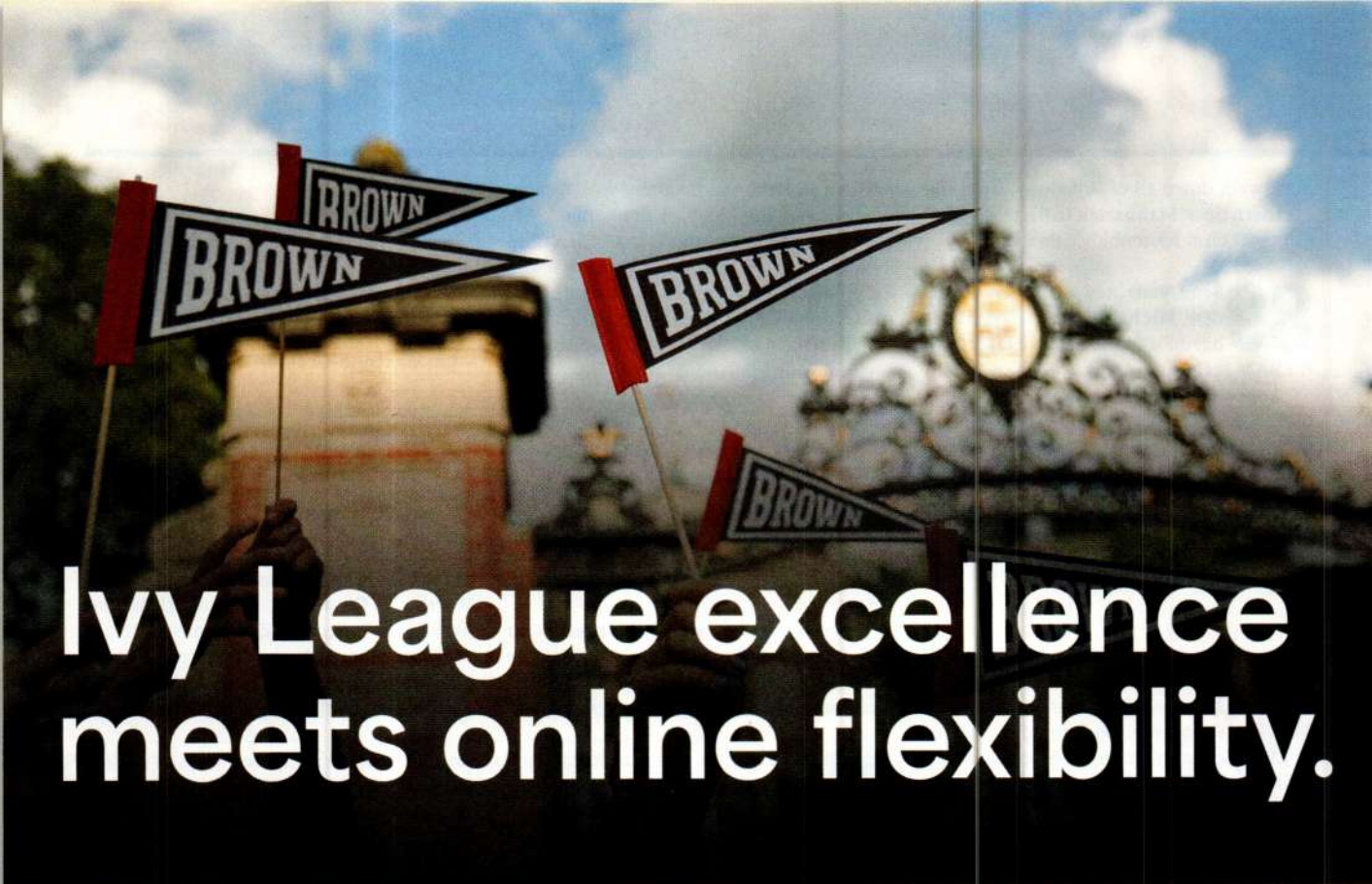


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THE CLASSES



From left: Jennifer Don Apy, Pam Gerrol, and Donald Apy (all '87).

94 Send your news to Vice President for Communications **Erica Wines** at ericajwines@gmail.com.

Akiko Ichikawa presented five iterations of her performance *Limited, Limited Edition* in Harlem and Woodside, Queens, for NYC Summer Streets, Flushing, and the South Bronx funded by Korea Art Forum, a NYC-based art nonprofit. She received a Puffin Foundation grant to further her ongoing piece, *Sometimes They Listen*. Akiko attended the 30th class reunion and was thrilled to catch up with **Jessica Arons**, Class President **Haru Okuda** and his wife **Hemie**, **Jen Corn**, and **Matt Zaklad**. Akiko writes: "I was dismayed when the corporation of my beloved alma mater chose not to divest from Israel in October." Akiko works four days a week as a case manager at Cypress Hills, Brooklyn's men's shelter for an organization overseen by NYC's Department of Homeless Services.

Jody Buckley Keating writes that some Brown women's basketball teammates reunited in Iceland in October, including **Jen Shaw Finch**, **Ellen Lenihan Fleherty '96**, **Jenn DeLucia Garofolo '95**, **Michelle Pagliaro Haywood**, **Martina Jerant '95**, and **Carol Ryan Livingood '93** (see photo pg. 68).

30TH REUNION

95 Send your news to class communications cochairs **Erin Mancuso Hobey** at ehobey@gmail.com; or **Atabey Sanchez-Haiman** at [\[gmail.com\]\(mailto:gmail.com\); or directly to the BAM at \[alumni_magazine@brown.edu\]\(mailto:alumni_magazine@brown.edu\).](mailto:atabeysh@</p>
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Executive coach and former Olympic athlete **Whitney Post Otto** and body image therapist **Deb Schachter** published *Body Image Inside Out: A Revolutionary Approach to Body Image Healing* on October 29 with **Sheldon**



IN THE NEWS

QMixers, a premium mixer company cofounded by **Jordan Silbert '98** and **Ben Karlin '98**, announces the appointment of **Betsy Frost '98** as its new chief executive officer. Betsy is a leader in the beverage industry bringing more than two decades of experience in driving innovation, growth, and brand transformation. Most recently, she served as the CEO of Hopark. Prior to Hopark, she served as president of DRY Soda Co., driving its premium positioning and building a 13-year career at General Mills.

"We push students to consider interactions beyond apps and screens to build people-centered solutions."

—**Adriana Valdez Young '01**

Press. The book teaches you how to become more skillful at listening, interpreting, and responding to your body image thoughts, so that you can develop a more constructive and connected relationship with your body.

96 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Jennifer Kleeman Wall writes:

"We've just held our inaugural fundraiser for Zach's Bridge at the home of **Kate Egan Gilbane '97** and **Tom Gilbane III '97**. We exceeded our fundraising goal and had a blast with a few other Brown alumni that included **Steven Birnbaum '74**, **Daniel M. Gilbane '98**, **Eleanor Heard Gilbane '98**, **Katherine Egan Gilbane '97**, **Stuart Kleeman '67**, and **Alexandra Gordon Patel** (see photo pg. 60). We've had a wonderful response from some of my Brown classmates after the class notes were posted and look forward to continued connections."

97 Send your news to Class Co-Vice President for Communications **Brooke Davis Nalle** at bnalle@gmail.com or directly to alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

98 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Michael Mancuso** at mikemancuso1323@yahoo.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Seth Kertzer (see **Pamela Gerrol '87**).

25TH REUNION

00 Send your news to Class Communications Cochair **Naomi Ture** at naomiture@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

THE CLASSES

"I spent four years working on this project and interviewed 150 people around the world to craft the narrative."

—Lauren E. Oakes '03

01 Send your news to class co-vice presidents for communication **Jennifer Kraemer Gewertz** at jenkraem@yahoo.com; or **Veronica Rotelli Vacca** at atrvacca@gmail.com; or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Adriana Valdez Young writes: "This

students to consider interactions beyond apps and screens to build people-centered solutions to real-world problems. I invite friends and classmates new to the ixD studio to stop by for coffee, cowork for the day, tinker in our play lab, or even teach a workshop. Also on the ixD team is **William Allstetter** '23, a creative technologist and writer serving as the studio technology assistant." Contact Adriana at ayoung9@sva.edu or via interactiondesign.sva.edu.

02 Send your news to Copresident **Waciuma Wanjohi** at waciuma@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Colonel (Dr.) **Vincent Capaldi** '03 ScM, '07 MD, chair of the department of psychiatry in the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine at the Uniformed Services University, was honored Nov. 19 with the prestigious 2024 Army Surgeon General's Award for Military Academic Excellence. This award is the

and behavioral health research.

Adam Marcus and Andrew Kudless cowrote *Drawing Codes: Experimental Protocols of Architectural Representation*. It explores the overlaps between computational design and architectural drawing. The book features 96 commissioned drawings and six essays.

03 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu. **Raffi Bilek**, director of the Baltimore Therapy Center, published *The Couples Communication Handbook: The Skills You Never Learned for the Marriage You Always Wanted* on Nov. 11 with HeartZig Press.

Lauren E. Oakes published *Treekeepers: The Race for a Forested Future* on Nov. 12 with Basic Books. The book offers a critical look at how forests contribute to the fight against climate change, revealing the complex roles they can play in making the planet more habitable for life into the future. Lauren writes: "I spent four years working on this project and interviewed 150 people around the world to craft the narrative. Many people paused their pressing work in research groups, nurseries, fields and forests, companies, NGOs, and governments to speak with me. Their perspectives helped shape this story, and I hope it makes a positive contribution to the wider discussion on the reforestation movement today."

04 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu. **Keally DeWitt** writes: "I was elected vice chair of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) board for a two-year term. SEIA is the national trade association for the U.S. solar industry. Every day I put the advocacy skills I learned at Brown to use in service of the energy transition."

Ari Johnson (see **Pamela Gerrol** '87).

20TH REUNION

05 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

06 Send your news to Class Co-Vice President for Communications **Jessica Pesce** at jessica.pesce@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Jess Beckerman (see **Pamela Gerrol** '87).

Thyra Heder published *Nose to Nose* on Sept. 17 with Harry N. Abrams Publishing. Thyra writes: "This is my sixth picture book for children I've made as both the author and illustrator, and it's a particularly fun one to gift. It's very funny and told through revealing what dogs are telling each other through



From left: **Ellen Lenihan Fleherty** '96, **Jenn DeLucia Garofolo** '95, **Michelle Pagliaro Haywood** '94, **Jody Buckley Keating** '94, **Jen Shaw Finch** '94, **Carol Ryan Livingood** '93, and **Martina Jerant** '95 (see pg. 67).

year, I became associate chair of the MFA in Interaction Design (ixD) at the School of Visual Arts in New York City, where I have been teaching design research and inclusive design since 2020. I am excited to be crafting new courses in accessibility, inclusion, and community design, which I have focused on in my own design practice. At ixD, we push

Army Surgeon General's highest honor and recognizes the outstanding leadership of one active duty officer and one reserve officer in military medicine, as well as their contributions to national academic achievements. He was selected for the award based on his distinguished career in military medicine and his contributions to advancing psychiatry

IN THE NEWS

Former Coursera executive **Leah Belsky** '02 was hired by OpenAI as its first general manager of education. In this role she will work to bring the artificial intelligence startup's products to more schools, boost its engagement with teachers and students, and work with OpenAI's team on their partnerships with the academic community.



BROWN **TOGETHER**

TOGETHER, WE MADE HISTORY

BrownTogether—the most ambitious fundraising campaign in Brown's history—came to an extraordinary close at the end of 2024.

Thanks to the generosity of more than **76,800** alumni, students, staff, faculty, families, and friends (including more than **33,000** first-time donors), *BrownTogether* surpassed its goals—twice—ultimately raising more than **\$4.44 billion**.

The result? Improved access to education, scientific breakthroughs, state-of-the art facilities, and knowledge creation that shapes lives, careers, and communities.

**Brown University has reached a new level of distinction.
And philanthropy made it possible.**

To the scores of Brunonians—especially our dedicated campaign co-chairs—who came together to demonstrate their pride in Brown and their support for the impact it has on the world:

Thank you!

ENRICHING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE ON COLLEGE HILL

Because donors answered the call, the University was able to further invest in all of the elements that make a Brown education and experience unparalleled. **Together, we are:**

Eliminating barriers for talented students to choose

Brown: We removed loans from undergraduate financial aid awards and increased aid for moderate-income homes, international students, and veterans.

Empowering students to find rewarding careers

after Brown: We supported the transformation of the Center for Career Exploration and BrownConnect+ networking platform.

Cultivating an environment in which all students can

thrive: We established and expanded student centers like the LGBTQ Center, U-FLi Center, and Office of Military-Affiliated Students.

Improving the student-athlete experience: We invested in athletics—through the new Athletic Excellence Fund, far-ranging facilities improvements, and more—giving teams the competitive edge they need.

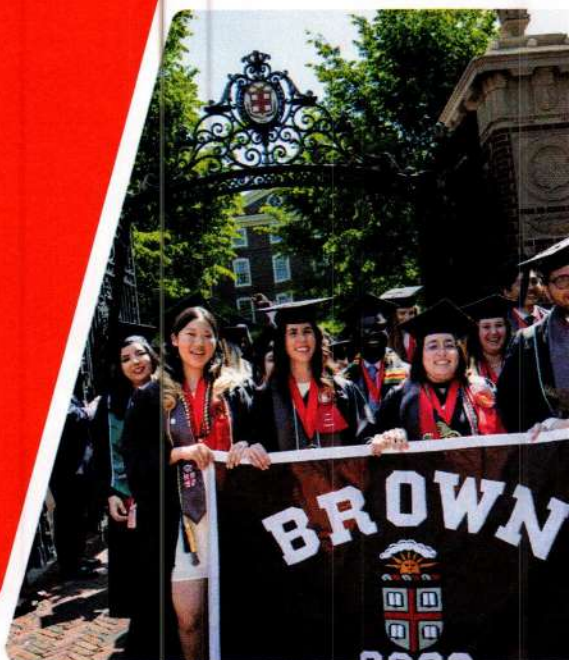
\$728M+
raised for financial aid

BrownTogether donors gave **more than \$728 million** toward financial aid for undergraduate, graduate, and medical students, helping make Brown more affordable for accomplished students from all backgrounds.

“I’m proud of the commitment the University has made to expand its financial aid program to ensure that cost considerations do not prevent talented students who qualify for admission from choosing Brown. It was heartening for me to see that financial aid drew such strong support from alumni across all generations, from Brown Annual Fund gifts to endowed scholarships.”

/ **Theresia Gouw '90, P'28**

Campaign Co-Chair & Treasurer, Corporation of Brown University





“Elevated support during the campaign years for endowed faculty positions will pay dividends for generations to come. It is our faculty who, first and foremost, foster an environment of collaborative, interdisciplinary scholarship and pioneering research at Brown.”

/ Ralph Rosenberg '86, P'17

*Campaign Co-Chair & Trustee Emeritus,
Corporation of Brown University*

ELEVATING OUR POSITION AS A LEADER IN TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATIVE SCHOLARSHIP

We saw historic levels of support for our academic community that is propelling knowledge creation across all fields of study to new levels of excellence.

Together, we are:

Bringing top talent to Brown: We surpassed our goal for new endowed professorships, improving our ability to retain stellar faculty and recruit top scholars.

Accelerating research that impacts lives:
We opened the Center for Alzheimer's Disease Research and the Legorreta Cancer Center, named the Carney Institute for Brain Science and the Ruth J. Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, and so much more.

Advancing curricular innovation: We enhanced the undergraduate experience through major initiatives like the Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship and Brown Arts Institute.

143
endowed
professorships

*BrownTogether donors surpassed
the initial goal of raising 110
new endowed positions and the
increased goal of 123 set in 2022.*

TRANSFORMING OUR CAMPUS

The campaign ushered in a remarkable era of campus development, creating a lasting legacy for future Brunonians. **Together, we are:**

Building world-class spaces: We built state-of-the-art facilities, like The Lindemann Performing Arts Center (part of the new Perelman Arts District), Engineering Research Center, and Center for Lacrosse and Soccer. We began construction on an Indoor Turf Facility, opening in 2026. And we broke ground on Danoff Laboratories, which will be the largest academic laboratory in Rhode Island.

Expanding intellectual centers: We renovated Churchill House and opened Stephen Robert '62 Hall at the Watson Institute.

Reenvisioning the spaces where students live and learn: We built the Chen Family and William and Ami Danoff residence halls, and Sternlicht Commons and Brown University Health & Wellness Center. And we renovated academic buildings like Friedman Hall.

\$777M+
raised for capital projects

BrownTogether donors raised more than \$777 million for 35+ capital projects, from new state-of-the-art facilities to renovated historic spaces.

"Growth, renewal, and sustainability were among the most important priorities for meeting the space needs of our campus. The *BrownTogether* campaign has heralded a new era for the arts at Brown, breathed new life into iconic buildings on campus, and opened new spaces for innovative and collaborative teaching, research, and scholarship. As exciting as this past decade has been, I'm even more excited for the future—the campus projects currently underway, and new ones to come, will continue to propel the fulfillment of Brown's mission."

/ Joan Wernig Sorensen '72 LHD'19 hon., P'06 P'06
Campaign Co-Chair & Fellow, Corporation of Brown University





“From the start, *BrownTogether* was an ambitious and disciplined campaign committed to realizing the vision of our strategic plan, *Building on Distinction*. That commitment, led by President Christina H. Paxson, embodies our institutional values of innovation, collaboration, inclusion, and service. What we accomplished together as a community will further elevate Brown’s value and impact on the world.”

/ Samuel Mencoﬀ '78, P'11, P'15

Chancellor Emeritus & Fellow, Corporation of Brown University

The impact of *BrownTogether* will be felt for generations to come.

Brown is better equipped than ever before to have a remarkable impact on the world through our distinctive academic programming, pioneering scholarship, and groundbreaking research. There are many exciting things on the horizon—from expanding our public health leadership, to helping shape the responsible use of artificial intelligence—and Brown is well-positioned to take it all on.

Thank you for your generosity. As we move boldly into the future, we’re poised to create even greater impact together in the years ahead.

There’s so much more to the story.

Scan this QR code to find stories of impact on the Alumni & Friends website.



THE CLASSES

their pee markings. It's also an emotional story of how misunderstandings can spiral and what it takes to enter a new community."

Jason Lambrese '10 MD writes: "What better way to celebrate entering our 40s than a reunion in San Diego where **Ariana Lupercio** and **Tim Courchaine** live? I flew in from Cleveland, **Katherine O'Keefe** from Philadelphia, **Meghan Edwards** from New York, and **Emma Zuroski** from Auckland. Can't believe it's been 22 years since we lived in NP3!"

This past fall, **Jeffrey Prystowsky** started a new job at Loeb & Loeb LLP, an entertainment law firm in New York City, to practice music copyright law.

08 Send your news to Class Communications Cochair **Adam Axler** at adamaxler@gmail.com.

15TH REUNION

10 Send your news to Class Co-Vice President for Communications **Christian A. Martell** at Christian_Martell@alumni.brown.edu.

Kevin Pratt and Lauren Elizabeth Mansy were married on Dec. 16, 2023, at College Church in Wheaton, Ill.

11 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Wendy Castillo and Kamden K. Strunk published *How to QuantCrit* on Oct. 30 with Routledge. Wendy writes: "It's the first book of its kind. It equips researchers and users of quantitative data with practices to alter how they collect and analyze quantitative data. Using Quantitative Critical Race Theory (QuantCrit) as a framework, this book develops the foundation for an iterative praxis to explore a range of questions that prompt practitioners and stakeholders to be engaged critics in working toward a more just and equitable society."

12 Send your news to **Aaron Nam** at aaronnam@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Emily Dellenbaugh and Kyle Droniak were married on Sept. 7 in Guilford, Conn. Emily was on the Brown sailing team, many members of which were there to celebrate, as well as alumni friends and family, including **Fariha Ali '10**, **James Barry '16**, **Susan Scavone Benz**, **Brad Dellenbaugh '76**, **Elizabeth**



Kevin Pratt '10

Gordon Dellenbaugh '87, **Spencer Dellenbaugh '24**, **Sally Evans '11**, **Victoria Wilson Foster**, **Lauren Bosso Kowall**, **Nate Myers '08**, **Ashley Noble '13**, **Nikolas Osvalds '11, '12** ScM, **Megan Grapengeter Rudnick '17**, **Yoojin Rhee**, **Cecilia Strömbeck '11**, and **Elizabeth Barry Swanson '11** (see photo pg. 76).

Eric Lewin writes: "On November 4, my wife, Emily Shire, and I welcomed our daughter Adira Hazel Lewin into the world. She has already brought immeasurable joy to us and numerous Brunonians, including Grandpa **Howard Shire '75**, Grandma **Sharon Eisenstat Shire '81**, Uncle **Adam Lewin '09**, Aunt **Sara Epstein Lewin '08**, and Uncle **Ethan Shire '19**."

13 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu. **MJ Batson** (see **Jesselyn Brown Radack '92**).

14 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Jonathan Staloff '19 ScM, '19 MD, a family medicine physician at the University of Washington in Seattle, coauthored *Reshaping Health Systems: What Drives Health Care and How You Can Change It*. Jonathan writes: "I am hopeful it can be a foundational resource for health professions students and trainees to learn about the core health sys-

tems structures and policies that influence patient care and provide concrete tools they can use to make change in their clinical environments. My education at Brown, studying public health in undergrad, and population medicine in medical school, were essential to my involvement in this book and its content."

10TH REUNION

15 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Ria Mirchandani writes: "I've partnered with my good friend and RISD '15 illustration alum, **Shivantika Jain Kothari**, to create a book about our two favorite cities, Bombay and New York. The book, *Bombay || New York*, tells the tangled tale of two cities that are as alike as they are different. Through 20 whimsically illustrated vignettes, the book draws parallels between daily life in these vibrant megacities, evoking appreciation for where you are, nostalgia for where you long to be, and inviting you to embrace the beauty of the in-between. Check out bombaynewyorkbook.com." (See *Fresh Ink*, p. 53.)

16 Send your news to Class Vice President for Communications **Alexandra Garcia** at alexandragarcia531@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Paige Morris is the cotranslator of *We Do Not Part*, a novel by the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature laureate Han Kang. The English translation has received a starred review from *Publishers Weekly*. Contact Paige at paige_morris@alumni.brown.edu. (See p. 50.)

17 Send your news to Class Copresident **Orlando E. Rodriguez** at lando1795@gmail.com or directly to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Louisa Conwill writes: "**Daniel Tully '23** and **Julia Toth Tully '24** were married at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church in Kula, Hawaii, on July 12. The wedding Mass was celebrated by two former Brown Catholic chaplains—Fr. Edmund McCullough and Fr. **Albert Duggan '03**. A number of Brown alumni were in attendance."

19 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Wendy Cohen (see **Judy Kosan Cohen '82**).

Ethan Shire (see **Eric Lewin '12**).

5TH REUNION

20 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

IN THE NEWS

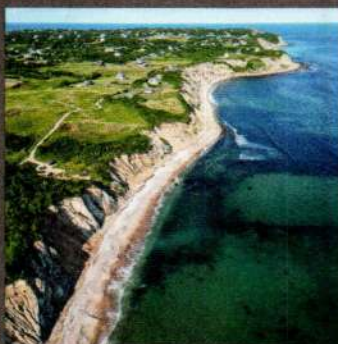
Intus Care founders **Robbie Felton '22**, **Evan Jackson '22**, and **Alex Rothberg '22** were among those announced on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list. Intus Care builds healthcare analytics software to help identify risks and optimize healthcare for low-income seniors (see "Data-Driven Elder Care," Jun.-Aug. '22).



International Tennis Hall of Fame

The International Tennis Hall of Fame is set to reopen on May 14th after undergoing exciting renovations! The freshly transformed museum will provide fans with a more interactive and modern experience. The Hall of Fame will also introduce new features and exhibits to celebrate legends and help support the sport's growth. Plan your visit today and come see the world's largest collection of tennis memorabilia!

tennisfame.com



Block Island

Just off the southern coast of Rhode Island sits a world of adventure, bliss, discovery, family fun, nature, romance, and zen. Its natural beauty is unsurpassed with miles of beaches, walking trails, rolling hills, farmland, wildlife, and breathtaking views. With quaint inns, luxurious hotels, local pubs, romantic dining, historic attractions, outdoor activities, and unique shopping, there's something for everyone to explore "on island."

blockislandinfo.com



Gardiner House

A newly opened hotel on the harbor, offering enchanting spaces to dine, drink, connect, and immerse yourself in the timeless charm that has made Newport special for over a century. Our restaurant, Flora, features breathtaking views, elegant interior design, and a menu inspired by the coastal Mediterranean, blending fresh flavors with seaside sophistication. And The Studio Bar—a place so inviting, you may never want to leave.

gardinerhouse.com

THE 411 ON 401

Where to stay and

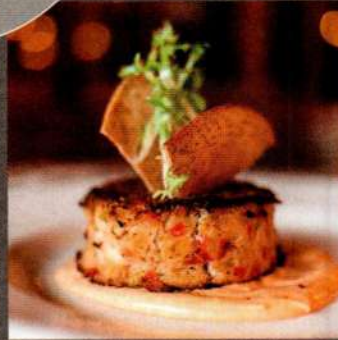
what to eat, drink, and do when you're in Rhode Island



Narragansett Brewery

The Narragansett Brewery's Providence waterfront taproom has become a destination for the entire Brown community. The team has a wide variety of craft beers and a rotating food menu that fit any graduation celebration, alumni gathering, or night out. Mark Hellendrung '90 has led the resurgence of Narragansett to prominence as one of the country's top 25 craft breweries.

narragansettbeer.com



CAV

Serving eclectic, contemporary, award-winning cuisine in a unique and historic loft, CAV (pronounced CAHV) has been a staple in Providence since 1989. Deliciously upscale with a warm atmosphere, we offer a sophisticated menu at night and an informal bistro menu for lunch and brunch. A fresco dining and private functions by request; designer home decor, art, and lighting available for purchase. 14 Imperial Place. (401) 751-9164

cavrestaurant.com



Newport Harbor Island Resort

The newly reimagined Newport Harbor Island Resort delivers the quintessential New England coastal experience with culinary celebrations, immersive activities, and personalized luxury. Enjoy enhanced guestrooms, reinvented restaurants, and a seaside spa surrounded by picturesque Narragansett Bay—all within minutes of downtown Newport, Rhode Island.

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THE CLASSES



From left: Nate Myers '08, Sally Evans '11, Elizabeth Barry Swanson '11, Nikolas Osvalds '11, '12 ScM, James Barry '16, Ashley Noble '13, Cecilia Strömbeck '11, Megan Grapengeter Rudnick '17, Fariha Ali '10, Emily Dellenbaugh '12, Susan Scavone Benz '12, Kyle Droniak, Spencer Dellenbaugh '24, Elizabeth Gordon Dellenbaugh '87, Brad Dellenbaugh '76, Yoojin Rhee '12, Lauren Bosso Kowall '12, Victoria Wilson Foster '12 (see pg. 74).

23 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
William Allstetter (see **Adriana Valdez Young** '01).
Daniel Tully (see **Louisa Conwill** '17).

24 Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Julia Toth Tully (see **Louisa Conwill** '17).

GS Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.
Mary Hutchings Reed '73 AM (see '73).

Russ Ellsworth '85 ScM (see '79).
Ann Marie Jodoin '86 AM and **Michael H. Wright** '88 MD first met, dated, and fell in love at Brown. After graduation, they followed different paths, but 32 years later, the two reconnected and have been making the most of their time together ever since. Last summer their adventures led them to Mount Rushmore (see photo on pg. 61). They write they are savoring every moment, from rediscovering each other to exploring new places. "Thank you Brown for bringing us back together!"

Elizabeth Searle '88 AM is cowriter of the feature film *I'll Show You Mine* (Duplass Brothers Productions), released last year in select theaters and now widely available on home screens via AmazonPrime, Peacock,

"Savoring every moment, from rediscovering each other to exploring new places."

—**Ann Marie Jodoin** '86 AM

AppleTV and more. She cowrote the film with **David Shields** '78 and Tiffany Louquet, and it stars Poorna Jagannathan (*Wolfs*) and drew positive reviews in the *New York Times* and elsewhere. Elizabeth is also the author of five books of fiction, including *A Four-Sided Bed*, which is in development as a feature film; and the playwright of *Tonya & Nancy: The Rock Opera*, which has been produced in Boston, L.A., Chicago, and New York City. The rock opera and *I'll Show You Mine* have both drawn national media attention. elizabethsearle.net.

Robin Arehart '93 MAT published *Ecofreak* on Dec. 1. Robin writes: "For all the Ecofreaks from Brown."

Chris Holmes '00 MAT, '12 PhD published *Kazuo Ishiguro Against World Literature*

on Nov. 14 with Bloomsbury Press.

Vincent Capaldi '03 ScM, '07 MD (see '02).

Kate Schapira '06 MFA writes: "My first book of nonfiction, *Lessons from the Climate Anxiety Counseling Booth: How to Live With Care and Purpose in an Endangered World*, was published on April 9, 2024, with Hachette Go. The book addresses our collective concerns about climate change with empathy, grace, and practical strategies to help us all envision a viable future. By moving through personal and general climate anxiety, frustration, helplessness, and grief, readers can move toward a sense of shared purpose and community care. The book is rooted in over ten years of listening to people's climate anxieties. I've staffed the Climate Anxiety Counseling Booth at environmental justice convenings held by Communities First and at the Bloomberg Green Festival, and I'm currently supporting climate and community resilience work in Warren, R.I."

Nikolas Osvalds '12 ScM (see **Emily Dellenbaugh** '12).

MD Send your news to the BAM at alumni_magazine@brown.edu.

Michael H. Wright '88 MD (see **Ann Marie Jodoin** '86 AM).

Vincent Capaldi '07 MD (see '02).

Jason Lambrese '10 MD (see '06).

OBITUARIES

Survivors and friends of the deceased can help by completing the obituary form found at brownalumnimagazine.com, or by sending information to: Obituaries, *Brown Alumni Magazine*, Box 1854, Providence, R.I. 02912. Managing Editor Sheila Dillon can also be contacted via email or phone: sheila_dillon@brown.edu or (401) 863-3118.

40s **Harold W. Demopoulos** '46, of Bristol, R.I.; Sept. 16, at 100 years of age. He practiced law in Providence for more than 50 years. He was proud of his Greek heritage and was a member of St. Spyridon's Greek Orthodox Church in Newport. He served in the U.S. Army during World War II. Ever true, he spent decades every fall at Brown Stadium with his late friends in seats at the fifty-yard line cheering on the Bears. He is survived by daughters **Abigail** '94 and **Amelia** '90, a son-in-law, two grandchildren, a sister-in-law, and a cousin.

Jane Walker Skogley '48, of Exeter, R.I.; Sept. 25. After raising her children, she received a master's degree in library science from URI and worked as a school librarian for the Exeter-West Greenwich school district until her retirement in 1989. She was proud to be a member of the board that established the Exeter Public Library. She volunteered and was involved with several organizations, including the Association of American University Women, the Kingston Hill Gardeners, the Kingston Book Club, Friends of Kingston and Exeter Libraries, and Kingston Congregational Church. She enjoyed playing tennis, giving it up only once she reached her mid-80s. She is survived by three children and their spouses, and two grandchildren.

Frederic W. Thomas Jr. '48, of Lebanon, N.H.; Sept. 13. He earned an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and went on to hold positions at Otis Elevator, in G.E.'s Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion program, and as a consultant and principal at McKinsey & Company in Chicago; Vancouver BC; and Melbourne, Australia, where he established McKinsey's first Pacific Rim office. He retired as a vice president at Citicorp in charge of its international insurance division in New York City. He joined the local chapter of SCORE and helped many small businesses in the Upper Valley to thrive and later became SCORE's national president, leading efforts to recruit more women and minorities to its ranks. He was a founding member of Thetford's Conservation Commission, and regional director of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, and served on the board of Upper Valley Land Trust. He also chaired the board of Childreach Inter-

national (formerly Foster Parents Plan) and helped establish Australia as a donor country. He enjoyed sailing, gardening, and beekeeping. He is survived by his wife, Marjorie; two daughters; a son-in-law; two grandsons; and two great-grandchildren.

50s **Cynthia Vaughan Baker** '50, of Columbus, Ohio; Sept. 15. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Hickory Hill Country Club, and First Community Church's Guild and Couples Circle. She enjoyed playing tennis for years until tennis elbow sidelined her, then turned to golf. She also enjoyed playing bridge. She is survived by three children and their spouses, five grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Mary Criscione '51, of Providence, R.I.; Sept. 17. After receiving her master's from Middlebury College, she taught in the Providence school system for 39 years, 28 of them at Classical High School teaching French and Spanish. She is survived by two sisters-in-law and several nieces and nephews.

Eugene E. Rogers '51, of Sarasota, Fla.; Oct. 7, of lung cancer. While at Brown, he participated in the NROTC program and served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy following graduation. He worked as a mechanical engineer and consultant, earning his professional engineer license through the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). Before moving to Sarasota in 2006, he held positions with Johnson Controls, founded his own business in St. Croix in 1967, and then moved to Puerto Rico in 1970. He was considered a pioneer in HVAC environmental control for pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities and held several patents. He had a lifelong passion for flying and worked with local flying associations. He owned several aircraft. He flew his plane to 48 states, as well as to Canada, continuing to fly until just two weeks before his death. He is survived by five children, 13 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

Cavit M. Toran '51, of St. Petersburg, Fla.; Aug. 1. After Brown, he continued his education at Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn and earned his master's in electrical engineering. For most of his career, he worked as a professional engineer at HNTB, a civil engineer-

ing company specializing in transportation infrastructure. He and his wife retired to St. Petersburg to be closer to family and enjoy the Florida sunshine. He enjoyed tinkering around the house, cooking Turkish meals, and watching tennis and football. He is survived by two sons, a grandson, his stepdaughter and son-in-law, and their two daughters.

Carlen P. Booth '52, of Wakefield, R.I., formerly of Barrington, R.I.; Nov. 2. He was in the NROTC program at Brown and served in the Korean War. After active duty, he served as an officer in the U.S. Naval Reserves and retired as commander. He earned an MBA from Boston University and had a 40-year career at New England Mutual Life Insurance Co. in Boston. He was involved in many committees and clubs—Newbury Investment Club, Barrington Committee on Appropriations, Barrington High School Building Development Committee, R.I. Society of Sons of the American Revolution, R.I. Society of Colonial Wars, R.I. Society of the Order of Founders and Patriots, Varnum Continentals, CT Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, AE Club, Providence Art Club, Squantum Association, Anawan Club, the Wardroom Club, and many genealogy and historical associations plus coached Little League and was cubmaster for the Boy Scouts of America. He loved to travel, enjoyed books about maritime and naval history and U.S. history, collected stamps and coins, and was an avid fan of Providence Bruins hockey. He is survived by three children and their spouses, seven grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and his brother **Anthony** '57.

Gloria Wright Werner '52, of Wilmington, N.C., and Chatham, Mass.; Oct. 7. After Brown, she married and started a family. Her husband's job meant they moved often, living in New York, Kentucky, Georgia, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and North Carolina. In 1992 they settled in Wilmington and she was involved in the garden club, a docent, and a member of St. James church choir. She enjoyed spending summers in their Chatham summer home. She is survived by five children and their spouses, 12 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

David B. Kunstler '53, of Miami; Feb. 29, 2024. He had a long career in sales and marketing with Eastern Air Lines. He is survived by his wife, Carol.

Robert Ouloosian '53, of Cranston, R.I.; May 14. He worked for the Department of Health and Human Services for 26 years in divisions of the Social Security Administration, Medicare, and Medicaid. He is survived by three sisters and nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Diana Coates Gill '54, of Noank, Conn.; Sept. 6, after living with Alzheimer's disease.



FAREWELL

Postmodern Lit Pioneer

Robert Coover deconstructed the classics and predicted the digital age

The fairy tale *Jack and the Beanstalk* is fairly straightforward: A poor boy climbs a beanstalk that takes him to a castle in the sky, where he steals a golden-egg-laying goose from a giant, who chases him back down the beanstalk. He cuts the stalk, the giant falls to his death, and he lives happily ever after.

But in Robert Coover's version in *Pricksongs and Descants*, his landmark 1969 collection of classic fairy tales deconstructed almost beyond recognition, it begins like this: "This was the hard truth: to be Jack become the Giant, his own mansions routed by the child he was. Yes, he'd spilled his beans and climbed his own green stalk to the clouds and tipped old Humpty over, only to learn, now much later, that that was probably the way the Old Man, in his wisdom, had wanted it."

That is but a sample of the prolific work of Coover, whose more than 20 novels and five story collections turned the idea of conventional fiction, with its linear storytelling and clear points of view, on its head and inside out. His writing exploded the Aristotelian unities of narrative, the idea that a story should occur at one time, in one place, and stick to one protagonist or narrator. To read him is to be often confounded but also set free in a world of multiple narrative possibilities, almost as though in a dream.

Coover—who not only pioneered postmodern literature with such writers as Thomas Pynchon, Donald Barthelme, and Don DeLillo, but also taught at Brown from 1979 to 2012, mentoring future writers including Sam Lipsyte '90, Rick Moody '83, and Alexandra Kleeman '07—died

on October 5 in a nursing home in Warwick, England, at age 92. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, the artist Pilar Sans Coover; three children; seven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. His best-known works, besides *Pricksongs and Descants*, include *The Origin of The Brunists* (1966) and *The Public Burning* (1977), which reimagined the real-life story of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

Coover never sought tenure at Brown, partly because he wanted to stay free to write as much as possible, which he usually did in the wee hours of the night. "When we'd be coming home from school, he'd be just waking up, so family dinners were like lunch for him," recalls his daughter, Sara Caldwell, a filmmaker and film/media studies professor at UC-Santa Barbara. "We'd sneak into his office, a private space where

he put notes for his novels on index cards on a big board."

But his contribution to Brown's literary life was enormous: not only did he help the University's literary arts department grow in scope and popularity, he also promoted—years before the mainstreaming of the Internet—the idea of storytelling that could be chopped up, linked together, and otherwise reconfigured through digital means, such as the use of hypertext. (This writer remembers sitting in, absolutely flummoxed, on a late-'80s class of Coover's in which he talked about how "links" could be used in fiction.)

"Bob was famous as a relentlessly experimental fabulist, exploiting myth, fairy tale, legend, and ancient storytelling within formally complex prose structures, but he was also a socially engaged and rooted writer, one who was deeply concerned with human relations and community, variously bound by religion and its cults," wrote literary arts professor John Cayley in a posthumous tribute to Coover.

Cayley added to the BAM: "He wrote every day, and if he couldn't write, he felt disturbed." Coover would print out his work and take it to a cafe, where he would "meticulously annotate" it—and also meet with students. "Writing for him was like an extreme sport," says Cayley, "almost like surfing."

Lipsyte, who teaches at Columbia, says: "I came to Brown as a fan of Bob's and eager to work with him," partly because "my dad had his book *The Universal Baseball Association*"—that, in fact, is only part of the title—"which was this very exciting and bizarre book about a guy who created an entire fantasy baseball game before there ever was such a thing and goes crazy when, through some rolls of the dice, his most beloved player is struck by lightning and his whole world falls apart." The

book, says Lipsyte, “stepped away from the realism of Bellow or Updike and this idea of what mainstream American fiction was supposed to be.” Once at Brown, Lipsyte took a seminar with Coover in which students read ancient myths, folk tales, and fairy tales, “then attempted to use those themes and forms in our own fiction.”

Lipsyte remembers Coover as kind, easygoing, and a wine aficionado—with his own cellar—who would bring “a nice bottle of wine and little cups” to his final classes. Tasked with opening the bottle despite little experience, Lipsyte recalls, he fumbled and pushed the cork into the bottle. “I remember a dark look crossing Bob’s face,” he says, “then an expression that seemed to forgive me.”

Coover lobbied successfully to have the Cave—a room for virtual reality projects, used mainly by Brown STEM students—made available for literary pursuits, such as having the words of poems come to 3D life around the viewer, with the ability to “click” on some of them to have them change shape or make sounds. That project was key for Samantha Gorman ’06, ’12 MFA, who said that Coover’s mentorship in blending storytelling with technology led to her currently running her own studio, Tender Claws, which does digital storytelling for companies like Netflix and Meta. “Bob was prescient,” she says. “He anticipated that these forms would emerge and become relevant.”

But despite Coover’s embrace of tech in the literary space, his own writing remained firmly on the physical page—both perplexing and liberating. “His work isn’t readily accessible to a lot of people,” concedes Cayley. But, says Caldwell, “he always stayed true to the idea of writing a book for an audience of him—himself—because it was the book he wanted to write.”

—TIM MURPHY ’91

While attending Brown, she made lasting friendships and met her future husband, **Robert** ’54, who preceded her in death. After graduating, they lived in Newport, R.I., for a short time before settling in Noank, where they were active in their community. She worked as an ophthalmic assistant and later was an assistant to the director of the Mystic Art Association. She was an artist and helped organize shows. She played the piano, sang and was in the choir at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Mystic. She also served as a class officer and was a member of the Ram Island Yacht Club. She is survived by daughter **Cathryn Oulighan** ’78 and son-in-law **J. David Oulighan** ’77; sons **Christopher** ’82 and **Robert** ’89; two daughters-in-law; and seven grandchildren, including grandson **Christopher Gill** ’12.

Peter C. Haensel ’54, of Levering, Mich.; Oct. 9. After graduating from the University of Wisconsin Law School, he joined the U.S. Army JAG Corps and served in Fort Sheridan, Ill. Once discharged, he returned to Milwaukee and joined the law firm of Affeldt & Lichtsinn, later renamed Lichtsinn & Haensel, S.C., where he practiced in banking, estate planning, and foundation law. In retirement, he and his wife moved to Michigan, where he enjoyed reading, golfing with his family, biking, ziplining, and taking his daily swim. He is survived by three sons and daughters-in-law, seven grandchildren, two sisters, a brother-in-law, and several nieces and nephews.

Adrian R. Ise ’54, of Media, Pa.; Sept. 14. After graduating from Georgetown Law School and Temple University, he worked with the IRS for many years and retired from GlaxoSmithKline in 1994. He was an active member of Our Lady of the Assumption Church and made a pilgrimage to Italy commemorating the 100th anniversary of its founding, as well as serving on its Academy School Board and on the Parish Council. He was a 4th degree knight in the Knights of Columbus and a veteran of the U.S. Army. He enjoyed cooking, home improvement projects, and sailing. He is survived by his wife, Rosemary; four children and their spouses; and eight grandchildren.

Robert A. Bernheim ’55, of State College, Pa.; Jul. 15. He received his master’s degree from Harvard and his PhD from Penn State, then joined the faculty of Penn State in 1961. He remained in the chemistry department teaching and performing research focused on fundamental molecular structure problems and applying spectroscopic techniques. He retired as professor emeritus in 1998. He published *Optical Pumping* and spent sabbaticals in Paris, Germany, and Colorado. He was a member of the American Chemical Society, a fellow of the American Physical Society, a fellow of

the former Optical Society of America, and a lifetime national associate of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. He is survived by his wife, Marguerite; a daughter; a son; and a grandson.

Hazel Fay Davis ’55, of Schenectady, N.Y.; Nov. 18. She is survived by her husband, **James** ’55; four children; 14 grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Teresa McGowan Heavey ’55, of Chatham, Mass.; Aug. 24. She worked in publishing at Little, Brown and Company and at TV Guide before stopping to raise her daughter. She later returned to the workforce and was involved in writing grants for Harvard School of Dental Medicine, then managed an oncology practice at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. She retired to Chatham and worked part-time as a medical transcriptionist at Cape Cod Hospital and was secretary for the Brown Club of Cape Cod. She is survived by her daughter **Lisa Heavey Evans** ’83, ’85 SCM, and son-in-law **Peter Evans** ’83; three granddaughters, including **Katie Goldman** ’10 and **Sally Evans** ’11; five great-grandchildren; a sister; a brother; and several nieces and nephews.

Nancy C. Dodson ’56, of Cambridge, Mass.; Feb. 5, 2024, after a brief illness. She worked at the former Pioneer Investments for more than 30 years. She had a wide collection of poetry books and enjoyed visiting the Cambridge Public Library and the Boston Athenaeum. She is survived by a brother and three nieces.

Jane Loveless Howard ’58, of Arlington, Mass.; Sept. 7, after the onset of dementia and a fall. She worked briefly as a public health nurse, then married and joined her husband in South Carolina at the Naval Ammunition Depot, where she became involved in the officers’ wives club. Upon his discharge, they moved to Cambridge, Mass., while he attended MIT and their family grew. After his graduation, they settled in Arlington and she became involved with the local Girl Scouts; Adventures in Music; St. Agnes Church, where she taught Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; and Arlington’s town planning department’s Vision 2020 task groups. An active member of Voice of the Faithful, she was also involved with Careful Where You Sit, an annual public viewing and sale of repaired and decorated old chairs. She enjoyed music and singing and, for many years, was a member of the MIT Women’s Chorale, where she was a skilled soprano and occasional piano accompanist. She helped run annual public lectures at MIT called Aging Successfully and enjoyed sewing, knitting, weaving, and gardening. She is survived by her husband, **Peter** ’58; two daughters; two sons; a daughter-in-law; a son-in-law; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and a sister.

OBITUARIES

Norman J. Bogar '59, of Baldwin, Md.; Nov. 4. He attended Brown on a ROTC scholarship and was a member of the men's basketball team. Following college, he served in the U.S. Navy and remained in the U.S. Naval Reserves for two decades. He began a career at Mobil Oil in Pittsburgh after earning his MBA at the University of Pittsburgh. His career continued to the Koppers Company, which moved him to Baltimore in 1977. He retired in 1997 as executive vice president and general manager of the succeeding organization, United Container Machinery Group, Inc. He is survived by his wife, Ruthanne; two daughters and sons-in-law; and four grandchildren.

June Nyberg Diller '59, of Portola Valley, Calif.; Jul 8, 2023. After graduating and marrying her high school sweetheart, Jim Diller, they started a family and moved several times due to Jim's job. She lived in Hong Kong, Germany, and Singapore before settling in Portola Valley. During her time traveling, she became interested in Chinese brush painting and antiques. Once settled in Portola Valley, she started her own Chinese antique business. She also made Chinese jewelry. She continued to travel and enjoyed sailing. Phi Beta Kappa. She is survived by her husband, two sons and daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren.

60s Denis R. Dignan '60, of Port Townsend, Wash.; Sept. 19. He always had a passion for boats—building and sailing them—and in 1976 purchased Hadlock Boatworks. During his career, many of the boats that he built could be seen in boating magazines and were showcased in the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival. He launched his last boat in 2019, named after his grandchildren. He is survived by his companion, Ilana Smith; a daughter and son-in-law; two grandchildren; and two stepchildren.

Ann Hansen Knepp '60, of Titusville, Pa.; Sept. 22. After Brown she graduated from Georgetown University Law Center and passed the bar exam the first time in both California and Pennsylvania. She began practicing law in Titusville in 1975 and retired in 2006. In retirement she cofounded Annie's Keepers, which manufactures accessories for needleworking. She was a member of the American Association of University Women and served as president of the League of Women Voters. She belonged to St. James Memorial Episcopal Church, where she served on the vestry. She served on numerous boards that included the Titusville Chamber of Commerce, Titusville United Way board, Titusville Garden Club, YWCA board of directors, and the Titusville city zoning board. She enjoyed gardening. She is survived by her husband, Burton; a daughter; two sons; five grandchildren; and three

sisters, including **Martha Hansen Adams** '69 and **Amanda Hansen** '72.

Arthur Will "Bill" Bertsch Jr. '61, of Boca Grande, Fla., formerly of Oyster Bay, N.Y.; Sept. 15, after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. He had a long and successful career as a trader on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, working at G.A. Saxton & Co., G.H. Walker Laird & Co., and Kuhn Loeb & Co. In 1977, he founded A.W. Bertsch, Inc. which grew to be a large independent brokerage firm before being sold to Bear Stearns in 2000. He is survived by three children, including daughter **Hilary** '88; seven grandchildren, and a sister.

Peter C. Greene '61, of Sag Harbor, N.Y.; Sept. 6, of a heart attack. He taught at Dickinson College before accepting a position teaching in the psychology department of Southampton College. He owned his own plane, which he flew for decades. In the 1980s, after leaving teaching, he used his plane as a source of income, flying banners over beaches. He is survived by three sons, a daughter-in-law, three grandchildren, a brother, two nieces, and a nephew.

Barbara Funk Hackett '61, of Boulder, Colo.; Jan. 19, 2024.

Robert E. Dineen Jr. '63, of Kent, Conn.; Oct. 12, after a brief illness. After more than 40 years of practice in domestic and international financial transactions, he retired as a partner from the New York law firm of Shearman & Sterling in 2009. During his tenure, he spent time in the firm's offices in Algeria, Hong Kong, London, New York, Paris, Toronto, and Washington. During the 1980s and 1990s, he led the sovereign debt restructurings of several Latin American countries and Vietnam. He was a generous donor to many causes. He is survived by his wife, Jeanne Olivier, and a sister.

Joseph J. Dougherty '64, of Berkley, Mass.; Sept. 1. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and graduating from Boston Law School, he practiced law from his home office. He was also the owner and operator of Pride of the Heather kennel and served as the president of the National Greyhound Association for several years. He played hockey at a young age and continued playing through school, and following Brown, as a member of the Boston University club team. He later enjoyed ice skating with his granddaughters. He is survived by three daughters, a son, seven granddaughters, and his former wife, Kathleen Dougherty.

Robert T. Hiatt '64, of Minneapolis; Sept. 14. After Brown, he volunteered with the Peace Corps and spent three years in Panama, where he met his future wife. They settled in Washington, D.C., and he trained volunteers for VISTA before working for the Rural Housing Alliance. They moved to South Dakota in

1972 to join the S.D. Office of Economic Development. He eventually became the executive director of the S.D. Housing Development Authority. He also had a business, Flying Lobsters, that flew live Maine lobsters to Pierre, S.D. He earned a law degree from the University of South Dakota, opened a law office, and later became the Crow Creek Reservation's tribal prosecutor. They moved to Minneapolis for his wife to attend graduate school and for him to try a variety of careers that included bartender, service dealer, real-estate agent, and kickboxer before accepting the position of retiree. In retirement he enjoyed puzzles, cooking, reading, collecting art, and taking road trips. He is survived by his wife, Dee; a daughter; and a son.

Anthony T. Matteo '64, of Northfield, Mass.; Sept. 3, after a brief illness. While at Brown, he was cocaptain of the football team and received semi-pro offers after graduation. He was honored as a defensive lineman of the Brown Football All-Decade Team in 2003. He also played lacrosse at Brown and was named All-Ivy Second Team. He went on to play for numerous clubs in the Boston area after graduation. He was a teacher and a coach. The highlight of his coaching career included being named New Mexico High School Football Coach of the Year while at Albuquerque Academy in 1976. He was a longtime soccer coach at Pioneer Valley Regional School in Northfield and coached numerous sports during his teaching and guidance career. He was active in his community and served on several boards. He enjoyed being outdoors, especially fishing, gardening, or hiking the Appalachian Trail. He is survived by his wife, Judith; a daughter and son-in-law; two sons; a daughter-in-law; five grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Stephen W. Richter '64, of Barton, N.Y.; Oct. 4. He was a mental health therapist, working until a month before his death. He is survived by his wife, Cheryl; three children; and four grandchildren.

William G. Earle Jr. '65, of Weymouth, Mass.; Aug. 2. While at Brown, he played football for four years and was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha. He went on to teach Latin and coach for nine years at the Berkshire School, followed by 30 years of teaching and coaching at Thayer Academy. Thayer Academy honored him by installing a plaque on his former classroom in his name. He enjoyed time spent at his vacation home in Tuftonboro, N.H., fishing for trout, playing bridge, and traveling. He is survived by his wife, Carol; a son and daughter-in-law; a granddaughter; and a brother and sister-in-law.

Robert D. Meringolo '65, of Cumberland, R.I.; Nov. 5. After graduating from Brown, where he was a member of the squash club

and president of the chapter of Delta Phi, he continued his education at Jefferson Medical College, earning his medical degree. He did his residency/fellowship at St. Luke's Hospital and joined the Public Health Service in Washington, D.C., at the Health, Education & Welfare Department, completing a one-year tour in Vietnam. In 1978, he moved to Rhode Island and started in private practice. He later joined Cardiovascular Associates of R.I. and became affiliated with South Coast Physicians Group. He was on staff at Miriam and Roger Williams hospitals. He retired in 2017 as an emeritus clinical associate professor of medicine. After retiring, he was a facilitator in the second year cardiology course at the Warren Alpert Medical School, where he was recognized as an outstanding teacher by his students. During his career he volunteered at the Washington Free Clinic in Georgetown and at the R.I. Free Clinic in Providence. He enjoyed exercising and traveling. Among his favorite vacations were a safari in Tanzania and a combination Galapagos Islands and Amazon River tour. He had a lifelong commitment to education and continued to take non-medical online courses regularly. He is survived by his wife, Debra; a daughter; a son; two stepchildren; five grandchildren; a brother; and two nieces.

John B. Nolan '65, of West Hartford, Conn.; Nov. 1. While at Brown, he played varsity ice hockey and lacrosse. He went on to earn a JD from Georgetown University Law Center and joined Day Pitney LLP in Hartford in 1969. He became a partner in 1976. He spent more than four decades as a commercial litigator, was recognized as the go-to lawyer for bankruptcy cases in the State of Connecticut, and was included in *The Best Lawyers in America* for more than 20 years. At the end of his career, he served as an arbitrator and mediator in commercial disputes. He was active in the Hartford community, including as a director and member of the executive committee for the Greater Hartford Arts Council. He enjoyed playing golf and was a member of the Hartford Golf Club, where he served as president from 2006 to 2008. He enjoyed traveling the world with his wife prior to her passing. He is survived by three daughters, including **Suzanne Nolan Vinson '95** and **Caroline C. Nolan '98**; a stepdaughter; a stepson; his brother **David '71**; and 13 grandchildren.

Robert C. Maddox '66, of Reno, Nev.; Oct. 11. He graduated from Harvard Law School and practiced law in San Francisco for 54 years before opening his own practice in Lake Tahoe, and later in Reno and Las Vegas. He was instrumental in the creation of Nevada's first construction defect statute and a supporter for the Eddy House serving homeless youth. He received the Nevada

That Preachin' Woman

Rev. Deborah McGill-Jackson '76

The Rev. **Deborah McGill-Jackson '76** of Newport News, Va., who died Sept. 25 from complications of a stroke, was an author, educator, and preacher. She was one of 14 women at Brown who chartered the Iota Alpha Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority in 1974 and would go on to work at its corporate office, as well as pursuing legal studies at DePaul University Law School and Indiana University School of Law, before she answered the call to the ministry. She earned a master of divinity with distinction in worship and administration from the school of theology at Virginia Union University, becoming ordained in January, 1982. As a chaplain, she ministered in various settings that included seven universities, two seminaries, and the Women's Correctional Center (Va.). She taught courses in history, the humanities, political science, sociology, English, and world religions. She was a noted author and preacher and was included in *Those Preachin' Women: Sermons by Black Women Preachers*. In 2014, she was honored by Hampton University Ministers' Conference (HUMC) as a woman in ministry founder. She was instrumental in forging the way for women participating in the conference when she was the first woman permitted to partici-



pate in a public capacity in 1981. The honor was bestowed on her by former United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Dr. Suzanne Cook-Johnson, the first president of the HUMC. During the last year of her life she celebrated her 50 years of service to Alpha Kappa Alpha by attending Brown's Black Alumni Weekend and at the Iota Alpha chapter's chartering anniversary

weekend, where she was given the distinction of being a golden soror and received her flowers for being a charter member of the chapter. Before retiring in 2019, she served as an assistant professor in the College of Education and Continuing Studies and as the assistant university chaplain of Memorial Church at Hampton University.

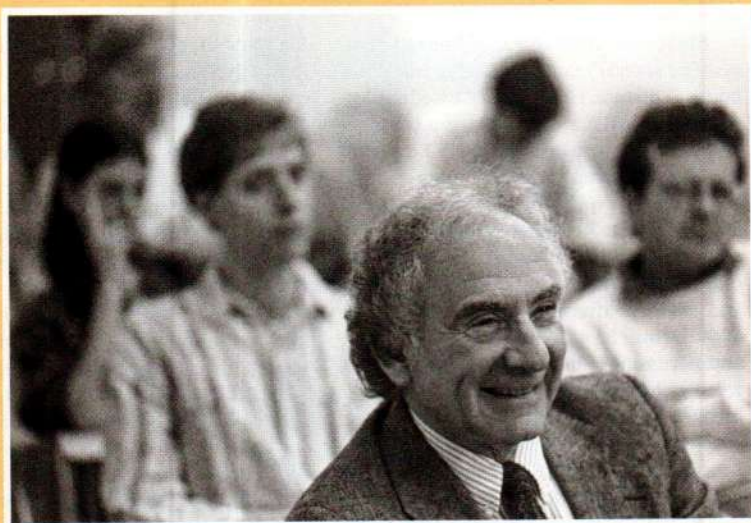
McGill-Jackson served on the board of the Peninsula Head Start Program, Aberdeen Gardens Historic Foundation, and other academic and civic organizations. Additionally, she spent several years teaching religion and history at Norfolk State University and social science courses at Strayer University, and was affiliated with several churches. She is survived by a daughter, a son and daughter-in-law, four granddaughters, a sister and brother-in-law, a sister-in-law, and several nieces and nephews.

Justice Association's trial lawyer of the year award and lifetime achievement award. He enjoyed hiking, biking, skiing, swimming, and jet skiing. He is survived by wife, Iryna; a daughter; a son; a grandson; and two sisters.

John D. Rulon '69, of Celina, Tex.; Sept. 11. He was an architect, whose buildings can be seen north of San Francisco in the Napa Valley area, and an inventor. He is survived by his wife, Laure Mandin; a daughter; a son; and two grandchildren.

70s Steve Morse '70, of Cambridge, Mass.; Oct. 26, of lung cancer. After graduation, he taught high school for two years, then freelanced at the *Warwick Beacon* and *Walpole Times*, writ-

ing music reviews, until being hired at the *Boston Globe* in 1978, where he had a 28-year career. He covered major events that included Live Aid, Farm Aid, and Woodstock II and III. For two years after leaving the *Globe* in 2006, he had a weekly radio show, "Morse on Music," on WBOS. He wrote and taught the online rock history course for Berklee College of Music for the last 12 years, teaching thousands of students all over the world. He served seven years on the nominating committee of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and was, himself, inducted into the New England Music Hall of Fame on Sept. 30, 2023. (See the BAM article "Live and In Person," Beyond the Gates, Nov.-Dec.'24.) He was a proud advocate for his artist son, who has autism and survives



FAREWELL

A Physicist and a Humanist

Nobel Prize-winning physicist Leon Cooper saw science as a thing of beauty

When physicist Leon Cooper came to Brown in 1958, he had already made one of the great breakthroughs in his field, establishing the mechanism behind superconductivity. Scientists had known for decades that certain metals cooled to extremely low temperatures acquired the ability to conduct electricity without any resistance, creating strong electromagnetic fields with minimal energy loss. Giants of physics—including Einstein, Heisenberg, Bohr, and Feynman—had tried and failed to explain how that could be. While still in his 20s, Cooper proposed a simple and elegant solution that happened to work. Named BCS theory after Cooper and two colleagues, John Bardeen and Robert Schrieffer, it earned him the 1972 Nobel Prize, assuring his reputation as a giant of physics himself.

By that time, however,

Cooper had already moved on to a new field—neuroscience, where he spent the next 50 years making new seminal discoveries. He died this past October 23 at age 94. “The fact he was able to make significant discoveries in that field was amazing to me,” says Brown physics professor Jim Valles. “This was not something he just dabbled in after he got the Nobel, but he really became master of it.” In remembering Cooper, Valles is one of many Brown colleagues who praises Cooper’s insatiable curiosity, wit, and clever ability to solve problems in disparate fields. “The easy decision would have been for him to continue what he knows, the theory of electrons, but obviously he needed a new challenge,” says physics professor Sean Ling. “That really required courage—and it really paid off.”

In an essay, Cooper himself explained the reason for the

change with characteristic wit: “The best I can come up with is to repeat Humphrey Bogart’s response to Claude Rains in *Casablanca*: ‘I was misinformed.’” Initially, Cooper surmised that his theories on electrons could be applied equally to neurons. While that method didn’t pan out, however, his novel approach to neuroscience starting with theory rather than observation led to an essential discovery about how synaptic connections in the brain are reinforced to facilitate memory and learning.

Born Leon Kupchik to immigrant parents from Belarus and Poland, Cooper showed an early passion for physical sciences—so much so that he nearly blew up a closet while mixing chemicals in his Bronx home at age 12. After graduating from Bronx High School of Science and Columbia University, he began

his career in high energy physics at Princeton before Bardeen recruited him to the University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign to work on the superconductivity problem. At the time, physicists had a vivid picture of electrons bouncing through the lattice of a wire to conduct electricity. No matter how much they tweaked their model, however, they couldn’t explain how that bumping around stopped at extremely low temperatures.

New to the field of solid-state physics, Cooper proposed an entirely different solution, identifying how pairs of unstable electrons could form weak bonds across the lattice, allowing them to glide effortlessly through the wire, even when they were separated by millions of particles in between. “Cooper pairs,” as they came to be known, became the basis for understanding superconductivity, ultimately enabling everything from fMRI machines to quantum computing.

“He managed to take something that was so complex and intractable and make it so simple,” says physics Professor Dmitri Feldman, who co-edited a book with Cooper on the 50th anniversary of BCS theory. “People had dismissed it, because the interaction is so weak, but he was able to think outside the box. Big discoveries always take a completely different way of looking at the problem.”

A lover of fine art and French wine, Cooper displayed a broad-minded approach to science, combining elements of philosophy and art in his explanations of the universe. His 1968 book *The Structure and Meaning of Physics* used an imaginative and poetic approach to explaining essential principles of physics, making it accessible to people of all levels. At Brown, he pioneered an innovative introductory physics class alongside Trinity Rep artistic director Oskar Eustis, political

deformation is greatest," he says. "Today, you can do this with GPS data, but Jan was doing accurate predictions from the naked eye, which is why her work is still well cited."

With students, she could be blunt, but her pedagogy was democratic and interactive well before those became teaching trends; she affectionately referred to students as "partner," as in, "Well, what do you think, partner?" And her love of the natural world was deeply sincere. Pamela Burnley '81, now a geology professor at UNLV, says that once, shortly after a blizzard that left the campus weighed down with snow, she came across Tullis crying. "I asked her what was wrong, and she said she was devastated because all the trees were being killed by the ice."

She loved the arts and encouraged students to pursue both scientific and artistic passions, attending their art shows and live performances. Ethan Wold '20, a guitarist currently getting his PhD in biophysics at Georgia Tech, says during his last yearly lunch with Tullis in Providence, she gave him a mandolin that had belonged to her grandfather. "She was a pretty extraordinary person," he says.

Tullis was also a role model and anchor for women entering a field long dominated by men. Burnley remembers experiencing "low-level sexual harassment" in the '70s. In Tullis, "I had somebody who could confirm my own feeling that what I was experiencing was not acceptable."

DEEPS is planning a celebration of Tullis's life this spring. She is survived by her ex-husband Terry, with whom she remained friends; two sisters; two nieces; and countless students, among them Leo Penny '20, who wrote in that Google doc: "I think about you whenever I see an inspiring outcrop and am always excited to inspire others just as you inspired me."—TIM MURPHY '91

him. Morse is additionally survived by his fiancée Jessa Piaia, a sister and brother-in-law, and two nephews.

Steven H. Cramer '72, of Denver; Sept. 12, after several years of suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He continued his education to become a CPA and worked as a business and software consultant at JD Edwards, Arthur Andersen, and Metaphor. Later, he began his own company, Next Business Systems, which he operated for 10 years. He enjoyed the fact that living in Denver offered him the opportunity to ski in the mornings and golf in the afternoons. He was an avid fan of the Denver Broncos and enjoyed traveling and discussing politics and history. He is survived by his wife, Kathi; a son; a sister; two brother-in-laws; and 14 nieces and nephews.

Denise M. Perreault '73, of Cumberland, R.I.; Oct. 22. She worked as a writer/reporter for the *Woonsocket Call* (now *Blackstone Valley's Call & Times*) for 24 years before retiring. She was an avid reader and member of the Red Hat Society. She is survived by three cousins.

Matthew S. Lieber '75, of Pittsboro, N.C., formerly of Weston, Mass.; Oct. 13, from glioblastoma. He began his career as a teacher and coach at the Chestnut Hill School in Chestnut Hill, Mass. He went on to become the assistant headmaster of the school and director of the Chestnut Hill Creative Arts Summer Program. He later changed his career path to banking and retired after 25 years in wealth management at Cambridge Trust Co., Boston. In Weston he was actively involved in community service, coaching, as commissioner of the Little League, a comaster of Northside Scouts, a member of the Weston Boosters Board, and served on academic review committees for Weston High School. He enjoyed tennis, kayaking, and being the head chef of the Lieber household. He is survived by his wife, **Lucy Leyland** '75; two sons; a daughter-in-law; two grandsons; two sisters; brother **Fritz** '70 and his husband; two sisters-in-law; three brothers-in-law, including **Stephen Barlow** '74; and several nieces and nephews.

Vincent R. Sghiatti '75, of Los Angeles; Sept. 24. He was a family medicine physician for 44 years before retiring. He is survived by a daughter; son **Vincent III** '13; a granddaughter; two great-grandchildren; a brother and sister-in-law; and nieces and nephews.

Joanna K. Zawadzki '75, of Bethesda; Feb. 10. She struggled with multiple chronic illnesses throughout her life. After completing her medical training to become an endocrinologist at Harvard and through an NIH-Georgetown University Fellowship, she worked in private practice and was later employed as a researcher at the FDA. She was a congregant and docent at Washington National Cathedral. She is sur-

vived by a sister and brother-in-law; a niece; and her former husband, James Everhart.

Robert L. Farnsworth '76, of Greene, Me.; Nov. 11, of cancer and Alzheimer's. He joined the faculty at Colby College in 1983 as a creative writing teacher. He taught at numerous institutions, spending the last 26 years of his career at Bates College, from which he retired in 2018. While at Bates, he received the Kroepsch excellence in teaching award on two separate occasions. He published three volumes of poetry, served as seven-year poetry editor of *The American Scholar*, was 2006 resident poet at the Frost Place in Franconia (N.H.), and brought poetry to libraries, schools, jails, and hospitals. He enjoyed sailing, playing tennis, jazz, rock, folk, and classical music and sang in the Maine Music Society. He is survived by his wife, **Georgia Nigro** '76; two sons; an aunt; and cousins.

Mark M.G. Pendergast '76, of Whitinsville, Mass.; Sept. 22, after a period of declining health. After graduating from Brown, where he played varsity football for four years, he began a career in the U.S. Army. He was a field artillery officer and Middle East foreign officer, was stationed at several posts in the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East, and was a recipient of the Bronze Star for action in the Gulf War, along with several other medals and commendations. After retiring as a Lt. Colonel in 2000, he served as dean of students at Northbridge High School. In 2006, he accepted a position in Afghanistan as a government contractor and spent the next eight years there, serving the Afghan Chief of Staff as his civilian advisor in Kabul. In 2010, he accepted a position as senior operations mentor to the Afghan National Army's Special Operations Command. He retired in 2014. He loved all animals, especially his cats, and visiting the casinos, especially playing Keno. He kept in touch with a broad group of friends from all stages of his life. He is survived by his wife, Francene Moran; four sisters-in-law; and several nieces and nephews.

Steven P. Levine '77, of Waban, Mass.; Sept. 13, of metastatic thyroid cancer. After Brown, he continued his education at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, graduating in 1980. He completed a residency in general practice at Albert Einstein Medical Center (Pa.), an anesthesia residency at the Medical College of Pennsylvania, and an endodontic residency at Nassau County Medical Center (N.Y.). He joined Limited to Endodontics in 1986 and practiced there until his retirement in 2019. He volunteered as a clinical instructor at Harvard School of Dental Medicine. He took pride in his physical fitness and continued to work out and run marathons, including the Boston and New York marathons. He was an avid Boston

OBITUARIES

minister counselor at the Royal Thai Embassy in Paris, France. He served in various director positions in the Office of the Permanent Secretary, and in the departments of ASEAN Affairs, European Affairs, and American and South Pacific Affairs. In his final post, he served as consul-general of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Xiamen, China. At the time of his death, he was to receive an ambassadorial appointment. He was the recipient of the Knight Grand Cross (First Class) of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand and the Knight Grand Cross (First Class) of the Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant. He is survived by two younger brothers, three nieces, and four nephews.

00s **Diana I. Richardson** '05, of Rumford, R.I.; Nov. 22, a few days after giving birth. She spent more than 15 years at Brown in a variety of roles, beginning as an operations and event coordinator. In 2019 she joined the division of advancement, first as a program manager in regional engagement on the Alumni Relations team, before transitioning into a new role with biomed advancement in 2022. In July, she was promoted to assistant director of biomed engagement in recognition of her outstanding work. She had many talents that included being a writer, photographer, and visual artist. She was passionate about storytelling and was working on a novel at the time of her death. Originally from Bermuda, she enjoyed spending time with her loved ones there and with her family and friends here. She was a lover of music and enjoyed traveling. She is survived by her wife, Kirsten Mello Richardson; a son; her mother and stepfather; a sister; a stepsister and her husband; a stepbrother and his wife; her mother and father-in-law; a sister-in-law and her husband; a brother-in-law and his wife; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

GS **John "Jack" T. Stevenson** '60 AM, of Toronto, Canada; Sept. 9. He taught elementary school in Winnipeg before attending Brown and becoming a professor of philosophy, first at the University of Manitoba, then at the University of Toronto, where he remained for three decades. He was instrumental in creating a course in ethics for the applied science and engineering department. In 1987 he published the textbook *Engineering Ethics: Practices and Principles*. He won a teaching award in 1988 from the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations. He retired in 1998. He is survived by his wife, Shelagh; a daughter and son-in-law; two granddaughters; three sisters and brothers-in-law; a brother and sister-in-law; and 15 nieces and nephews.

Carl W. Smith '63 ScM, '66 PhD, of Albuquerque; Sept. 7, after suffering a stroke five years earlier that had left him in a wheelchair. He had worked at Sandia National Labs before retiring in 1996. In retirement, he and his wife traveled the world and he chronicled his life through photography that he published. Before his stroke, he enjoyed climbing mountains all over the world, running marathons, cycling with the New Mexico Touring Society, and skiing as a member of the New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club. He later enjoyed working on the Continental Divide Trail and joined the Friends of the Sandia Mountains, where he was a sawyer and could cut down 20-inch diameter trees. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn; two sisters; and several nieces and nephews.

Susan Thierolf Jarosz '65 MAT, of Liverpool, N.Y.; Sept. 9. She taught high school English for nearly 30 years and was honored to have been voted one of Liverpool High School's teachers of the year. After retiring, she worked with Literacy Volunteers and was an active member of the English Speaking Union's Syracuse branch, where she served as secretary for 10 years and was cochair of the Shakespeare committee, which organized the branch's annual Shakespeare competition for area high school students. She also enjoyed traveling all over the world with her husband **Theodore Jarosz** '65 MAT, who survives her. She is also survived by a son and daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.

Nancy E.L. Schulze '65 AM, of Baltimore; Sept. 2. She received her JD from the University of Cincinnati and worked as an attorney for the law firm of Venable, Baetjer & Howard in Baltimore for several years. She later was self-employed practicing health care law in Baltimore and consulting with the firm of Hanysworth Sinkler Boyd of Greenville, S.C. She donated her time and resources to numerous causes and was instrumental in the creation of the Red Devils, a Maryland based charity devoted to assisting families of individuals diagnosed with breast cancer. She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren, hosting dinner parties for friends, gardening, reading, and traveling. She is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, three grandchildren, a brother and sister-in-law, a niece, and a nephew.

Thomas D. Dudderar '66 PhD, of Chatham, N.J.; Sept. 10. He was a research scientist and engineer at Bell Labs, later AT&T, for 40 years. He obtained several patents throughout his career. He collected Lionel model trains and railroad memorabilia and enjoyed reading, boating, traveling, and working in the yard and on house projects. He is survived by his wife, Betty; a daughter; and a son.

Roland Folter '67 AM, '69 PhD, of Larchmont, N.Y.; Aug. 30. He was a rare book cat-

aloger at the Beinecke Library before becoming a professor of German at the University of Illinois. He was also a director of H.P. Kraus Rare Books in New York from 1977 to 2023. A former violinist in the Frankfurt Youth Symphony Orchestra, he published two books and was a member of the Bibliographical Society of America, the International Association of Bibliophiles, and the Grolier Club. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann Kraus.

Daniel B. MacLeod '67 MAT, of Charlestown, R.I.; Sept. 8. He taught at Cranston East High School (R.I.) and St. Luke's School (Conn.). He spent seven years in Nova Scotia, where he was a guidance counselor at a vocational school. After moving back to Rhode Island, he spent many years on the Chariho school committee. He is survived by his wife, Judith; three daughters and their spouses; three granddaughters; and a sister.

Clifford Hickey '69 AM, '77 PhD, of Ladysmith, B.C.; Jan. 19, 2024, of Guillain-Barre syndrome. He had a long career in the anthropology department at the University of Alberta, rising to the rank of full professor. He specialized in the circumpolar region, supervising and training many graduate students in this field. He also served on the advisory board of the Boreal Institute until its dissolution, then founded the Canadian Circumpolar Institute to replace it. Later, he served on the board of the Sustainable Forestry Management Network of Excellence. He moved to Ladysmith in 2006 and enjoyed sailing, golf, visiting old students and colleagues, and travel. He is survived by his wife **Lynn Mooney Hickey** '67, '69 AM; two sons; and a brother.

Ronald G. Fisher '74 AM, '77 PhD, of East Lansing, Mich.; Nov. 6, after a 13-year battle with cancer. He was a professor of economics at Michigan State University for 49 years. He served for more than a decade as dean of the MSU Honors College and was the recipient of 2014's Steven D. Gold Award from the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management. He authored *State and Local Public Finance*. He enjoyed playing the saxophone and performing in an adult jazz band. He was an avid sports fan and rarely missed an MSU football, hockey, or basketball game. He also enjoyed camping in the Adirondacks. He is survived by two sons, a daughter-in-law, three grandchildren, a sister, a brother and sister-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

G.A. Adegboyega '75 ScM, of Nigeria; Oct. 1. He was on the engineering faculty at Obafemi Awolowo University from 1979 until his retirement in 2018. He was a member of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria, and the International Centre for Theoretical Physics. He enjoyed fishing and farming.

scientist Tom Beirsteker, and history professor Tom Gleason that explained concepts using the play *Copenhagen*, about the meeting of great physicists on opposite sides of World War II. "Instead of presenting physics as a set of dry facts and equations that described how the world works, he emphasized that it was a human creation that could and should be appreciated for its aesthetic beauty," Watson Institute communications specialist Pete Bilderback, who worked with Cooper for 20 years, wrote in a remembrance.

Cooper founded the Center for Neural Science at Brown in 1973 with interdisciplinary faculty from physics, mathematics, biomedical sciences, and linguistics, as he set himself the task of understanding a paradox in how the brain learns. Neuroscientists have long known that connections between neurons across synapses are reinforced the more they are used; the problem was that over time, those synapses would eventually become saturated, losing the ability to store information.

Cooper theorized that synapses were bi-directional and could be both weakened and strengthened depending on use; crucially, he proposed, the threshold for those adaptations also shifted with use, becoming harder to change the closer a neuron got to saturation, so it never got there completely. "Leon's theory had a big impact. There are some great examples of theoretically inspired experiments in neuroscience, but they are rare," says Mark Bear, neuroscience professor in the Picower Institute for Learning and Memory, who helped collaborate with Cooper on experiments proving his theory. "It was in the physics tradition of theoreticians coming up with a potential solution and then experimentalists going back to

the bench and saying, 'Let's test these assumptions.'"

Despite Cooper's stature in physics, Bear found him humble in approaching their collaboration. "He respected others for what they knew, and didn't make you feel inadequate for what you didn't know," he says. "When it came to biology, he was an eager student of mine."

Those who worked with him describe him as an enthusiastic mentor to junior colleagues who was always willing to give a speech for incoming students or graduates, coming up with an original talk every time. Current physics chair Vesna Mitrovic remembers him being generous with his time in reviewing her own early research on superconductivity, years after he had switched fields. "We had quite a few discussions on papers I was writing early on," she says. "It was nice to hear him say, 'Let me think about it,' and then days later come back and say, 'I thought about it, and I couldn't find anything wrong with the interpretation.'"

Survived by his wife Kay, daughters Coralie and Kathleen, and four grandchildren, Cooper continued to rack up awards throughout his career, including receiving the 2013 Susan Culver Rosenberger Medal, the highest honor Brown faculty can bestow. Perhaps his quirkiest honor was having Sheldon Cooper, protagonist of the science-y sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*, partially named after him. Even after he retired from teaching in 2014, Cooper still returned regularly to the Barus & Holley buildings to inspire colleagues with both his knowledge and joie de vivre. "Every day when he walked by, he said hello with a big smile," remembers Ling. "He was just an immense presence on the seventh floor—I feel a very big void in his absence."

—MICHAEL BLANDING

Red Sox and Bruins fan. He is survived by his wife, Debbie Wennett; a son; a sister; brother **Mark Levine** '70; and nieces and nephews.

Thomas J. Curchin '78, of East Montpelier, Vt.; Sept. 21. He graduated from the University of Vermont College of Medicine in 1982 and completed a family medicine residency at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia before returning to Vermont to practice. In addition to life in East Montpelier, he lived two years in the territory of American Samoa, where he operated the emergency room. He enjoyed hiking, biking, Nordic skiing, gardening, and reading. He is survived by his wife, Sarah Kinter; two daughters; two sons; a daughter-in-law; a son-in-law; two sisters and brothers-in-law; and a brother and sister-in-law.

80s Peter L. Brunelli '80, of North Eastham, Mass., formerly of Franklin, Mass.; Sept. 8. He had a successful career in the insurance industry working for Liberty Mutual & New Hampshire Insurance before joining the Thomas F. Keefe Insurance Agency, eventually becoming a vice president and co-owner. He was actively involved with his community as a board member of the Franklin Housing Authority, president of the Fletcher Hospital Corporation, and member of the United Chamber of Commerce, Franklin Finance Council, Franklin Business Association, and founder and president of the Franklin Gridiron Club Alumni Association. He is survived by his wife, Barbara; three sons; two daughters-in-law; a granddaughter; and three siblings and their spouses.

Jeffrey P. Grading '83, of San Mateo, Calif.; Oct. 6. He is survived by his three children, his mother, three siblings, eight nieces and nephews, and his former wife, Mary Grading.

Chatchai Atsavapranee '87, of Bangkok, Thailand; Nov. 25, 2023. After graduating, he spent five years in Paris, earning the Diplôme d'Etudes at the Université de Paris VII. He then studied history and international relations at the University of Sydney. He returned home and entered the Royal Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1994, rising through the ranks and receiving appointments that included First Secretary Royal Thai Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations, New York. He resigned before his final year at the U.N. to return home to Bangkok and take care of his ailing mother. Following her death, he rejoined the Thai Foreign Ministry in 2006 in Bangkok, serving as a diplomat in various development and international affairs organizations. In 2010, he was appointed counselor and later

Alfred P. DeFonzo '75 PhD, of Amherst, Mass.; Aug. 30. In 1976 he got married and moved to Washington, D.C., where he joined the Optical Division of the Naval Research Laboratory. In 1983, he left government service to join the faculty at the Department of Computer and Electrical Engineering at UMass Amherst. He played a critical role in developing the Center for Collaborative Adaptive Sensing of the Atmosphere (CASA) Engineering Research Center. He authored more than 50 research articles. He was a skilled sailor and enjoyed sailing with his family, hiking, and traveling. He had a passion for cooking and enjoyed creating intricate meals and sharing them with friends and family. He is survived by his wife, Adele, and a son.

Nancy D. Buchenauer '80 PhD, of Severna Park, Md.; Oct. 1, as a result of a cerebral hemorrhage after a fall. She taught at St. John's College, first on the Santa Fe, New Mexico, campus and then in Annapolis. She retired from teaching in 2013. She is survived by her husband, Frank Rowsome.

Paul T. Carcieri '80 AM, of North Providence, R.I.; Sept. 27. He worked for the state of Rhode Island in the department of the attorney general and then in the department of transportation, most recently as chief facilities management officer. He taught history in the evenings at local colleges, most recently as an adjunct professor at CCRI. He was a lecturer at Blessed Sacrament Church and enjoyed running, playing golf, camping in Maine, and going to New England Patriots games. He is survived by his wife, Dea; a son and daughter-in-law; and three granddaughters.

Peter B. Green '80 AM, of Hamilton, Bermuda; Nov. 11. He was the head of a family of hospitality investors and a charitable donor and believer in Bermuda's potential. The family owned Sonesta Beach resort property, the Hamilton Princess, Waterloo House, and Overbay, in addition to resorts in the Caribbean. After his wife died of breast cancer in 1990, he and his sons became supporters of the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre. He was an original supporter of the British research and care charity Breast Cancer Now. In 2007, the family established the Green Family Scholarship to allow ten Bermudians in financial need to study abroad. He also was involved with Prospect College in Jamaica, a fully funded boarding high school set up by his father-in-law. From 1997 to 2003 he served as a member of the Brown Corporation. He is survived by sons **Alexander** '99 and **Andrew** '01; a daughter-in-law; two grandchildren; and two brothers.

Donna M. Piazza '80 PhD, of Hampden, Mass.; Oct. 14. She was a clinical assistant professor of psychology in the department of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She

A Dialysis Doc and Arts Supporter

Joseph A. Chazan

Joseph A. Chazan, of Providence, a leading doctor, professor, businessman, and supporter of local arts, died Jul. 26. After completing his training at the former Boston City Hospital, he was a renal fellow at New England Medical Center and Beth Israel Hospital and served as a doctor in the public health service in Birmingham, Ala., before joining the Brown faculty. He developed and initiated the kidney dialysis program at Rhode Island Hospital. For many years he was clinical professor of medicine at Brown and director of renal diseases at Miriam Hospital, Memorial Hospital, and Rhode Island Hospital. In 1973, he established the Artificial Kidney Center of Rhode Island, the state's first free-standing dialysis clinic. He went on to

open eight more R.I. clinics and two in Massachusetts and was the founder of Nephrology Associates Inc. A great supporter of the arts, through the years he donated much of his collection to more than 40 museums. All the dialysis clinics he was associated with were furnished with art by local artists. "I think it would be nice if there were many more professionals who adorn their offices with local art instead of posters and prints," he would say. In 2008 he launched NetWorks

Rhode Island, a visual arts project. His wealth of knowledge and experience were instrumental in shaping the WaterFire Arts Center and its programs. He was involved with the Steel Yard, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, AS220, Farm Fresh, and the Providence Public Library. In 1978, he and his wife Helene, who predeceased him, established a scholarship in their names at the Rhode Island Founda-

tion for the benefit of the Wheeler School. In 1984, they endowed the Friends of Glass scholarship at RISD, and in 1985, they established a scholarship fund for University at Buffalo medical students. He was honored with the 2013 Pell Award for outstanding leadership in the arts, while the American Kidney Fund named him its nation-

al caregiver of the year. The RISD Museum presented a selection of objects donated by the Chazans in its 2005 exhibition "Chazans' Choice," and in 2019 presented him with the RISD president's medal of honor. He was proud of his Jewish heritage and served as a member and supporter of Temple Beth-El for more than 60 years. He is survived by his partner Vicki Veh; two daughters and sons-in-law; a son and daughter-in-law; nine grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.



was also a member of the staff of McLean Hospital and had a long career in private practice. She is survived by her husband, John R. Muenster; a son; two sisters; three brothers; and several nieces and nephews.

Mojtaba Rajaei '90 ScM, '92 PhD, of Brookfield, Wisc.; Oct. 21, of metastatic squamous cell cancer to the lungs. After emigrating to the U.S. and earning an education, he worked as a mechanical engineer at Harley-Davidson. He also previously worked as an engineer at Zebra Corp. and Hewlett-Packard and taught as an adjunct professor at URI, UW-Milwaukee, and Marquette University. He was a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. He enjoyed bird watching, playing table tennis and chess, and listening to famous Iranian

musician Mohammad-Reza Shjarian. He is survived by his wife, Zahra; daughter **Sareh Rajaei** '11 MD; a son; and a granddaughter.

Ezra F. Tawil '92 AM, '00 PhD, of New York City; Jan. 23, 2024, of melanoma. He was an English professor at the University of Rochester. Prior to joining that faculty in 2011, he taught in English departments at Wesleyan, Harvard, and Columbia universities. He authored two books, *The Making of Racial Sentiment: Slavery and the Birth of the Frontier Romance and Literature, American Style*; and *The Originality of Imitation in the Early Republic*. He also edited two books during his career. Eight of his essays and articles appeared in a variety of scholarly journals and publications. He is survived by his wife, **Kirsten Lentz** '00 PhD; a son; and three sisters.



Players gather for board games during January's AmiCon session.

CURRENT OBSESSION

Mass Calendar Invites

FIVE MINUTES WITH Zachary Amiton '25, '25 ScM

The current obsession that I have is bringing people together and sending mass calendar invites, which is a little bit fluff, but I'm sticking to my story. I just think it's really sick in college because, for most periods of your life, it's rare that you can have a silly idea and execute on it immediately and have everybody wanting to participate be within a 10-minute radius. So pretty much every silly thing I've done in college, every now and then you don't get exactly the turnout you want, but for the most part, you put a fun name on it, you send 90 people an invite and then expect that 20 to 30 will be there—and it's a great time.

Often it manifests in a party theme. I did one with my friend Luca. For an entire year, everywhere I went, I got told I looked just like him. I had a mom during Parents Weekend stop me and be like, "I saw your a cappella show and you were amazing," and I was like, "that's not me. I'll pass the compliment along." So we did a twin-themed party, where

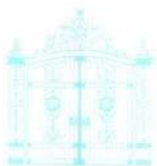
everyone had to bring their doppelgänger.

The ones that I feel are most memorable... Zalentine's Day, aka Zack Day, which was my favorite. This was very much inspired by a massive meetup of Johns or something and also my friend Zach Susini ['25]. I'm Zack with a k, he's Zach with an h, and it's not very deep, but I feel for Zac/k/hs in particular there's so many variations on a very short name and everyone says "mine is better," so I was just like, fuck it, we'll get them all together and have a good time.

It's really gratifying to know that whatever I do, I can get people together for the most part. I just sent out an email to like 100 people that was like "we should get lunch but for real" edition. I just like putting a lot of people in an email. If I send out a mass calendar invite to all of my friends, I can name it whatever, I can have it whenever, and I can trust the people will show up.—INTERVIEWED BY RACHEL KAMPHAUS '25

Trivial Pursuits

In the past year, I did a music book club, so I just sent out a thing to everyone I knew that was a music nerd. It was a weekly album listening thing that was super cool and then ended up growing, which was super fun. I host a mass board game thing every month called AmiCon, because my last name is Amiton (pronounced Am-i-tin) and everyone says it wrong (Am-i-tawn). I have a big *Trivial Pursuit* game that I want to enact.



COLLEGE HILL SOCIETY



LEAVE A LEGACY

"It's not about what you can achieve as an individual. It's about the legacy you leave behind."

—ILEANA POROZZI '18, *Leonilda Gervasi Scholarship* recipient

What will you be doing 100 years after you graduate from Brown?

Leonilda Gervasi graduated from Pembroke College in Brown University in 1921 and her legacy continues on College Hill. Born near Naples, Italy, she was the first woman in her family to attend college. After graduation, she devoted her career to public libraries from the New York Public Library — where she worked to help immigrants apply for citizenship — to the Marfa Public Library in west Texas.

In 1993, Brown University received a gift from her estate, creating the Leonilda Gervasi Scholarship. **Since then, her scholarship has been awarded more than 60 times to 37 students and counting.**

To learn how you can leave a permanent legacy at Brown through a planned gift, please contact:

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Send a description, photo, or link to kerry_lachmann@brown.edu to be considered for the 2025 guide.

DEADLINE: JULY 18



Lamp by Elliott Rosenberg '24, Brown/RISD dual-degree graduate in furniture design, computer science, and engineering. Find his work at perennial.design.
Photograph by Joel Benjamin